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AFRICAN PEACEBUILDING?

Reflecting the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa through the *Kujenga Amani* podcast

Faculty of Social Sciences

Master's Thesis

April 2020

ABSTRACT

Tuuli Lindroos: African peacebuilding?: Reflecting the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa through the *Kujenga Amani* podcast
Master's thesis
Tampere University
Master's Degree Programme in Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research
April 2020

As one of the most conflict prone regions, the importance of research focusing on peacebuilding on the African continent cannot be over-emphasized. Since the end of the colonial rule, the development of peace and security context in the African continent has been influenced by a specific agenda linked with the removal of the imperial forces. The peace and security narratives have highlighted the need for "African solutions for African problems" with a reference to African sovereignty and ownership of peace and security issues on the continent. At the same time, peace interventions by African states have proven to be no less controversial than international alternatives. Such contemporary contradictions in peacebuilding context in Africa highlight the need to analyze the notion of African peacebuilding, the discussions around peacebuilding activities on the continent and elaborate how the topic is addressed in current discussions.

With the use of narrative analysis, this thesis seeks to contribute to this need by analyzing how experts of peacebuilding produce information about the challenges, prospects and future trends of peacebuilding efforts in Africa. The research aims to answer what kind(s) of narrative(s) about peacebuilding in Africa is produced by the *Kujenga Amani* ('building peace' in Swahili) podcast of the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council. Moreover, this thesis seeks to contribute to the discussion on how information is produced and how the production of certain narratives about peacebuilding in Africa from certain positions (re)shape the realities they reflect.

The resulting narratives are *the needy Africa* -narrative, *African first* -narrative and *real peace is local but liberal* -narrative. The first two narratives answer how the *African* is narrated through the peacebuilding in Africa and the last narrative what kind of *peace* is narrated through peacebuilding in Africa. The results create a paradox where the 'African' perspectives, 'African' ownership and 'local' peacebuilding are promoted as a critique to the failures of liberal peace while at the same time, the ideals of peace and peacebuilding in Africa are connected to the liberal peace theory. The same contradiction of reasoning the current state of peacebuilding in Africa is present in all three narratives.

This thesis concludes that the widespread discourse of 'African peacebuilding' and the promotion of 'local' and 'African' approaches to peacebuilding seems to create a picture of, as if there would be, agreed understanding of both the content and meaning of these concepts as well as the consequences of creating policies which reflects a certain understanding of the 'African'. In the light of this thesis however, such consensus over the concepts remains to be defined, which sets both hindrances of developing efficient and adaptable peacebuilding approaches and increases the risk of misusage of the concepts to cover other motives and agendas. This thesis concludes by stating that the concept of 'African peacebuilding' needs to be further evaluated and its contextual usages and motives assessed in order to avoid using the term just as a rhetorical façade. Furthermore, it introduces an idea of a needs-based peacebuilding approach, which moves beyond pre-defined conceptual categorizations exposed from the outside that produce unnecessary distinctions between liberal, local and African and instead focus on the genuine engagement of the local actors and their context specific needs.

Keywords: liberal peacebuilding, postcolonial peacebuilding, local turn(s), African peacebuilding, local, African, narrative analysis

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to express my utmost gratitude to all my dear friends, student colleagues and teachers in the Saint Augustine University of Tanzania who shared their views and thoughts with me. I own my deepest thanks to all the encounters in Tanzania. Without them, this research would not have come to be.

I also want to thank my supervisor Dr. Eeva Puumala for her continuous support and guidance throughout the research process. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to PhD student Prince Agyei for his insights during the writing process.

Furthermore, I wish to thank all my fellow friends and peers in the Peace Programme for the inspirational discussions and mutual support.

Finally, I own a special thanks to my dear family for their consistent support and encouragement throughout my academic studies.

Tuuli Lindroos
April 2020

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
APN	African Peacebuilding Network
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
ECOWAS	The Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGAD	The Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGO	Inter-governmental organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SC	Security Council
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

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1. Introduction

> African leaders today appear cagier than in the past about collective peacemaking, with some apparently wanting to restrain the continental body's peace and security role. (International Crisis Group[1])

> I am confident that our efforts in sustaining peace have laid a firm and solid foundation to build on. (Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union[2])

> *Pax Africana* ('African peace') asserts that the peace of *Africa* is to be assured by the exertions of *Africans* themselves. (Mazrui 1967)

Since the end of the colonial rule, the development of peace and security context in the African continent has been influenced by a specific agenda linked with the removal of the imperial forces. Moreover, it is often associated with the notion of providing "African solutions to African problems" as phrased by the eminent political economist George Ayittey as a response to the crisis in Somalia and an embraced policy by the African Union (ISS 2008, Ero 2016, 182). However, as the program director of International Crisis Group Comfort Ero (2013) states that while the "African solutions" might assume more legitimacy, peace interventions by African states have proven to be no less controversial than international alternatives. Furthermore, the concept of *Pax Africana* ('African peace'), developed by a Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui (1967), is outlined as a peace agenda guaranteed by Africans themselves by creating and sustaining collective security and peace on the continent, with their own material and financial resources. This notion entails the incentive for African states to protect themselves against imperial powers, not against themselves. (Mazrui 1967, Karbo & Virk 2018, 5.) This agenda of African led ownership and sovereignty in peace and security development together with the removal of outside forces on the continent can be summarized in the concept of *Pax Africana,* which reflects the perspectives of the contemporary literature analyzing peacebuilding efforts on the African continent, with a focus on the African agenda in peacebuilding (See the Palgrave Handbook of Peacebuilding in Africa by Tony Karbo and Kudrat Virk 2018).

[1] International Crisis Group: Briefing no. 151 *Eight Priorities for the African Union in 2020*, published 7 February 2020.
[2] Statement made by his excellency ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security to the African Union Peace and Security Council and United Nations Peacebuilding Commission at Interactive Dialogue on Monday 11 November 2019.

However, at the same time such African ownership and sovereignty of peace and security development over the continent is questioned and the unity of the continent is argued to be fragmented in reality (see Muchie et al. 2016). Since the independence, most African states remain largely dependent on former colonial powers due to weak and fledgling state characteristics with inherited problems, pervasive poverty and fragile economies along with plethora of violent conflicts across the continent (Karbo & Virk 2018, 4). Furthermore, the peacebuilding activities, including stability promotion, peace and socio-economic development, on the African continent face several challenges. The difficulties of integration across the continent, the variety of prolonged and continuous conflicts and persistent development hindrances are examples that pose challenges to the African peacebuilding and conflict management institutions and even put into question its full existence due to the lack of cooperation, resources and implementation of policies (see Aall & Crocker 2016).

Such contemporary contradictions in the context of peacebuilding in Africa highlight the need to analyze the notion of African peacebuilding, the discussions around peacebuilding activities on the continent and explore the multiple narratives about peacebuilding in Africa. As the narratives produced about African peacebuilding affect and shape the actions, policies and the overall public reactions related to peacebuilding in the African context, research analyzing the production of such narratives is necessary in order to develop the African peacebuilding context and produce more applicable solutions to the challenges it's facing. Furthermore, as one of the most prone continents to violent conflicts today, it is crucial to further examine the character of African peacebuilding context to improve the prospects of peacebuilding initiatives on the continent. The aim of this research is to explore the multiple narratives produced about peacebuilding in Africa through the way the issue is addressed in expert interviews in the podcast. Furthermore, at the age of growing abundance of information from various media platforms, critical assessment of the use of concepts and narratives becomes increasingly important.

The African continent has been widely studied from various perspectives within peace and conflict studies. However, the ongoing change in current world politics, the implications of climate change and changes in the migration dynamics has brought the continent to the particular focus of the world's current and emerging powers[3]. In addition to the increasing socio-economic role of the continent in

[3] See the Crisis Management Initiative's Peace Talks podcast episode: "Realignment of global affairs" with Itonde A. Kakoma, Programme Director at Crisis Management Initiative, published 17 December 2019.

many international, regional and national political spheres[4], also the concept of African peacebuilding is mentioned on different platforms and discussions to highlight and promote various political objectives. The concept is often linked with a strong African ownership and sovereignty over the issues related to the peace and security development of the continent (Karbo & Virk 2018, Bah 2017). In general, peacebuilding can be defined as a set of ideas, values and practices, which are culturally embedded into certain contexts, mediated by the interaction between local communities and international, national, and regional actors (Dzinesa & Curtis 2012, 16). Furthermore, it is a political concept and therefore its definition is contested over meanings and interpretation (Dzinesa & Curtis 2012, 16, Greener 2011, 357–358), where the concept is both a tool for scholars and policy makers to describe and analyze the reality of international affairs to create knowledge and a vehicle used by practitioners to apply these concepts to prescribe processes and determine outcomes (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 15).

The existing research on peacebuilding efforts in Africa contributes to this need of understanding and conceptualizing the objectives of peacebuilding on the continent (See All & Crocker 2016, Dzinesa & Curtis 2012, Hyden 2015, Jeng 2012), with the focus on understanding the tensions and debates between various peacebuilding ideas and programs (See Dzinesa & Curtis 2012, Ola & Ethiane 2016). Traditional peacebuilding initiatives have relied on the liberal peace theory, which sets human rights, good governance, the rule of law and liberal economy as the grounds for peace. As the liberal peace theory has been increasingly contested, space has been created for critical peace theories to question the universalist nature and Western driven assumptions included in the liberal peacebuilding theory (See Hyden 2015, Bah 2017, Paris 2010, Richmond 2011 & 2008, Roberts 2011).

However, studies focusing on the narratives produced particularly about peacebuilding in Africa are fewer in number (See Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016, Falola & Haar 2010). In general, the concept of peacebuilding has been studied through narratives produced to justify certain approaches, concepts and paradigms, for example interventionist policy and concepts dominant within the field of peacebuilding (Chandler 2010). The existing research on narratives and peacebuilding efforts in Africa suggest that the narratives produced in different peacebuilding contexts are diverse and often conflicting between different actors and peacebuilding approaches (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016,

[4] For example, the European Union has recently emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships with Africa as part of the European Commission's external relations, see the European Commission's publication: *A Joint Africa-EU strategy*, published 15 July 2019, the Finnish government is drafting the historically first Africa strategy, see the article by Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (2019) *Africa is an important partner*. Published in 22 November 2019.

Omach 2016). Mac Ginty and Firchow (2016) argue that the case study findings from research in South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe show that localized perceptions of peace, safety and security are articulated by different narratives, which implies different perceptions over peacebuilding efforts in top-down and bottom-up approaches. Therefore, there is a need to further explore different narratives produced to bridge the gap between contradictory narratives of different actors in the peacebuilding discussions.

Furthermore, Falola and Haar (2010, 1–4) in their volume *Narrating War and Peace in Africa*, argue that Western representations of wars and conflicts in Africa tend to be reduced into solely problematic and negative stereotypes through postcolonial imagery of primitive tribes deemed savage and barbaric. Although there continues to be numerous ongoing conflicts in post-independence Africa, the role of the negative representations seems exceptionally dominant to African continent when compared to others (Falola & Haar 2010). Matthews and Ali (2004) argue, that representations of wars in Africa are often presented through the perspective of primitive tribes, with savage and barbaric characteristics together with images of suffering, starvation and bloodshed. Furthermore, the strong role of negative representations of war in Africa implies that the successful peacebuilding efforts and initiatives seem to gain less attention. Therefore, in order to establish a more balanced representation, the narratives of peacebuilding in Africa need to be further examined.

However, recent publications on the state of peacebuilding in Africa highlight also the positive aspects of development in the area of peace and security context in Africa (See Karbo & Virk 2018). The progress in the search for *Pax Africana* ('African peace') continues and the volume entails a critical, yet constructive and optimistic, perspective especially in the development and future prospects of the Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) of the African Union (Karbo 2018, 458–459). This shift from the traditional reproduction of negative stereotypes of the peace and conflict context of post-independence Africa to a more optimistic and constructive approach to address the security challenges of the continent imply a change in the way peacebuilding in Africa is discussed today.

Moreover, previous research on narratives in peace and security issues in the African continent highlights the security aspects[5] and developmental perspectives[6]. The current literature also examines

[5] Narratives about peacekeeping efforts in Africa see Mzali 2018, Africa's role in international security see Beswick 2010, ontological security in the Horn of Africa see Newbery 2019, border politics see Ramutsindela 2017.
[6] Narratives on environment see Moseley & Laris 2008, health HIV/AIDS see Jansson 2017, development success and failure see Brooks 2018, economic development narratives see Khisa 2019.

the role of narratives in the dynamics of conflict and state-building[7]. Therefore, the existing research on narratives in peace and conflict studies is abundant in terms of studying the role and production of narratives by the *subjects/ 'them'* in conflict and post-conflict contexts experiencing the phenomenon and the usages of narratives in reconciliation processes as part of peacebuilding[8]. However, the role of narratives produced by the *objects/'us'*, meaning the policymakers, academics and NGO actors, who are in the position to determine and define the phenomenon, is less examined. In other words, the framing/ production of the narratives on the phenomenon of external/outside actors involved in the field of peacebuilding in Africa is less explored as the research has a strong focus on the local experiences and subjects within the conflict-affected contexts. Therefore, how information is produced about peacebuilding in Africa needs to be further examined.

The aim of this thesis is to address the gap by exploring how the experts of peacebuilding produce information about the challenges, prospects and future trends of peacebuilding efforts in Africa. The research aims to answer what kind(s) of narrative(s) about peacebuilding in Africa is produced by the *Kujenga Amani* ('building peace' in Swahili) podcast of the African Peacebuilding Network (APN). The African Peacebuilding Network is provided by the Social Science Research Council, "an independent, international, nonprofit organization founded in 1923" (SSRC 2020). APN is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York (SSRC 2019a). The research question is explored through two sub-questions where the first focuses on the ways in which the *African* is narrated through the podcast; and the second research question on what kinds of meanings are given to *peace* that is narrated through the podcast. These aspects hopefully elaborate what is meant by *African peacebuilding*, a concept promoted by the APN. The podcast discussing the views and perceptions of five expert interviews in the field of African peacebuilding, presents an interesting case study producing the narrative as part of the APN of the SSRC, and therefore contributes to the conceptualization of what is meant by African peacebuilding today by specific contributor to the contemporary peacebuilding discourse. The network states that their agenda is to reach critical voices in the field of peacebuilding in Africa, including scholars, policy makers and practitioners. Therefore, the research also offers an important discussion over the increasing use of podcasts as a new type of media platform to spread views and

[7] Conflict-supporting narratives see Bar-Tal, Oren & Nets-Zehngut 2014, grievance-based narratives see Unruh & Abdul-Jalil 2014, recasting national-narrative see Basu 2013.
[8] Narrative therapy and peacebuilding see Pia 2013, organizing after conflict: narrative and postcolonial perspectives see Cole 2011, narratives of torture survivors sub-Saharan Africa see Higson-Smith 2013, narratives and trauma see Van Der Merwe & Gobodo-Madikizela 2007.

information globally[9]. In the privileging of some narrative over others becomes also a question of power. Therefore, the analysis contributes to the existing research exploring what kinds of narratives are constructed about the challenges, prospects and future trends related to peacebuilding in Africa, which theoretical debates do these narratives reflect and ultimately, how information is produced. The research question this thesis seeks to answer is the following:

What kind(s) of narrative(s) about peacebuilding in Africa are produced by the *Kujenga Amani* podcast series of the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council?

In order the explore the multidimensional research agenda, the research question is divided into two sub-questions to enable more in-depth analysis. The sub-questions are the following:

i) How is the *African* narrated through the podcast?
ii) What kind of *peace* is narrated through the podcast?

Therefore, the research agenda of this thesis aims to contribute also to the ongoing discussion over the meaning and interpretations of peacebuilding and what constitutes as peace (See Jenkins 2013). Furthermore, the research questions and the perspective adopted here contributes to the existing demand to explore they ways peacebuilding is framed. Mac Ginty and Firchow (2016, 309) argue that their research on the discursive framing used for different peacebuilding views reflects what Carolyn Nordstrom (1997) has termed 'a different kind of war story', where "the broad story of insecurity and precariousness is there in both the top-down and the bottom-up versions, but the 'stories' are often told differently. They contain different emphases, inflections and silences." Furthermore, they argue that,

> "These different stories are revealing not just about the different perspectives and ways of 'seeing' conflict and social change. They are also revealing about issues of epistemology and positionality. Crucially, they are also revealing about power; the power to write, to over-write and be heard." (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016, 309)

They argue that the research shows that the everyday narratives of peace, conflict and social change vary depending on the position of the source producing the narrative, e.g. states, international organization and local level and others engaged. (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016, 309). Similarly, this

[9] Various actors in the field of peace and conflict have published podcast series to address related topics in the field of peacebuilding, e.g. Crisis Management Initiative, International Crisis Group, United Nations, The Ulkopolitist, African Leadership Centre and International Rescue Committee.

study adopts the perspective of analyzing "a different kind of peacebuilding story" produced by the *Kujenga Aman*i podcast and the interviews of the experts in peacebuilding in Africa.

The underlying notion of this thesis is not to find objective "truths" about the topic but rather present a critical discussion over the various uses of popular concepts and the construction of narratives in public discussions. This premise contributes to the acknowledgement of the multiple pluralities on the African continent, as ignoring the existing socio-cultural, historical and political diversity and presenting Africa through generic references and over-simplification has received abundant postcolonial critique especially in terms of its colonial overtones which reduce the vast diversity on the continent to a homogenous entity (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005). Therefore, this research aims to explore one perspective of this abundant plurality present on the African continent, while acknowledging the existing vast diversity. This notion also includes the chosen data set, as the *Kujenga Amani* podcast provider, the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Sciences Research Council, presents a single voice in this plurality of actors aiming to define what peacebuilding in Africa is today and what it should be.

With regard to the outline of this research, I will begin the discussion by presenting a brief overview of the peace and security context of the African continent with a focus to the historical developments and discussions around peacebuilding challenges in chapter 2. The third chapter presents the theoretical underpinnings of the contemporary peacebuilding debates, mainly consisting of the liberal peace paradigm and its postcolonial critique. In the fourth chapter, the research design and methodology are presented. This chapter discusses the methodological decisions made in reflection to the chosen *Kujenga Amani* podcast and through the specific nature of the case study, elaborates the analytical models adopted to analyze the research topic. This chapter includes the evaluation of the ethical implications, scope and limitations of this research together with the assessment of the researcher's positionality. Chapter 5 presents the results where the analysis is presented through the critical assessment of the direct quotes from the data with the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3. The interconnections of the results are further discussed in the chapter 6. Finally, the last chapter summarizes the discussion and assesses the implications of the results more broadly in peace and conflict studies.

2. Background

To understand and address the historical developments of the peace and security environment on the African continent [10] is necessary in order to elaborate the contemporary discussions over peacebuilding in Africa. This chapter addresses the developmental trends from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) established in 1963 to the transformation process of the African Union (AU) that initiated in the 1990s and completed in 2002, the development of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) that was established in 2003 and the role of regional organizations alongside these developments in the peace and security landscape on the continent (Karbo 2018, 7–8). The discussion concludes to the critical assessment of the major challenges of the peace and security context and evaluation of the future prospects of the institutions and their capacities to address the peace and security challenges facing the continent.

2.1. Historical developments of peace and security institutions in Africa

The continental cooperation pursuing the promotion of peace and security objectives in Africa locates to the postcolonial period in the 1960's, when most of the African states gained their independence (Lizak 2016, 77). Founded in 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was the first initiative to bring the African nations together during the decolonization period and address issues related to the continent. It is argued that throughout its existence the OAU's approaches to conflicts and peacebuilding were embedded in the Western based conception of prevailing international legal architecture, which at the same time excluded other viable alternatives outside that order (Jeng 2012, 8). One of the core priorities of the OAU was to pursue conflict management mechanisms to promote peace and security over the continent. However, these attempts, including the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration, were not deployed in practice regardless of various reform attempts which eventually led to the suspension of the organization. (Lizak 2016, 76.)

After the collapse of the OAU, there was space for reform, which was filled by the normative framework of the African Union and its Constitutive Act adopted in 2000. According to Jeng (2012, 9),

[10] The discussion evolves around the institutional developments from the OAU to the AU and the APSA in order to limit the scope of discussion to give a brief overview of the exceptionally extensive topic area.

> "[T]his framework has been perceived as representing a milestone in the evolution of a particular kind of legal and philosophical peacebuilding disposition, and the beginning of a narrative of Africa's norms formulation agenda. Such optimism springs from the perceived potential of the Constitutive Act in providing avenues for recasting approaches to internal conflicts in Africa."

However, while it is argued that the OAU's Charter and the AU's Constitutive Act are not fundamentally different as the core principles of establishing continental peace and security are convergent (Karbo 2018, 10), the AU is claimed to be more effective and robust in terms of institutional structure and capacity to tackle the continent's peace and security challenges than its predecessor (Ero 2013).

Moreover, British scholar Paul Williams (2011, 3) suggests that the African Union's Constitutive Act pursues a specific vision for conflict management distinct from its predecessor, which is based on the notion that in order to achieve "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa" security and stability needs to be achieved. This vision is outlined in the Union's Constitutive Act of the AU, which

> "commits AU members to accelerate political and economic integration of the continent, including through the establishment of a common Africa security and defense policy; to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its member states; to promote peace, security, and stability throughout Africa; and to encourage democratic principles of good governance, human rights, and sustainable development." (Williams 2011, 3)

According to Karbo (2018, 10) this envisioned agenda of the AU emphasizes the role of the continental body in the field of peace and security with an acknowledgement that the Union needs to move away from the previous principle of non-intervention characteristic to the OAU and its structural limitations, to a more interventionist approach in order to achieve stability and development.

Furthermore, the practice of peacebuilding initiatives on the African continent is argued to illustrate diverse forms of practices and co-operation by the decision-makers (Aall & Crocker 2016). At the institutional level the OAU, and later the AU, has adopted number of continental mechanisms to address the issues of peace and security. The Continental Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution was established in 1993 by OAU to settle conflicts in terms of border disputes. However, due to its ineffectiveness, The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), established by the AU, replaced it with a broader array of peace and security institutions (Kuwali 2018, 45). APSA can be described as a "combination of institutions, politics and norms that make up

a continental network intended to prevent and resolve crises and conflict, and to support post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts" (Aall & Crocker 2016, 12). These institutions comprising the APSA[11] include the African Union, the African Union Commission, which is the coordinating organ; the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC), which is the political decision-making body; the Panel of the Wise, which is the body responsible of consultation and mediation; the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), which gathers information and conducts conflict analysis; the African Standby Force (ASF) containing the military, police and civilian resources and the Peace Fund covering the APSA costs (Kuwali, 2018, 46). The human, financial and logistic resources of the APSA are supported by the member states of the African Union and other partnerships with other countries and organizations (Cilliers & Gnanguênon 2016, 138).

In addition, the African peace and security architecture includes regional cooperation mechanisms which promote peace and security over the continent, such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). These mechanisms play a strong role in the peace and security network, and from a key component of the APSA together with international organizations, such as the United Nations and the European Union, and with bilateral actors France, Britain, the United States and China. (Aall & Crocker 2016, 12, Kuwali 2018, 52, Ero 2016, 181.) It is argued that the RECs were one of the major actors conducting peace operations during the post-Cold War period (Ero 2016, 172). For example, between the year 1990 and 2003, the East African Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) executed peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire (Kuwali 2018, 53).

It is argued that the role of regional peacebuilding in Africa is increasingly recognized in the literature and offers forms of leadership that have a potential for promoting more effective peacebuilding efforts on the continent which is reflected also in the promotion of AU's cooperation with regional organizations (Kewir & Ngah 2018, Cilliers & Gnanguênon 2016, 144). As stated in the UN Charter's Chapter VIII, the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security is highlighted and includes several advantages as regional powers have greater interest in sustaining peace in their neighboring areas (Ero 2016, 175–176). The regional organizations' proximity to the conflict can be also an advantage in terms of rapidness of the response and resource efficiency in intervention expenses, including humanitarian, financial, social and military aspects. Furthermore,

[11] The list of institutions comprising the APSA presented here is not exhaustive: various grassroots level organizations and actors are affiliated with the APSA and therefore the listed institutions form only the main structures of the organization.

regional actors may be seen as more legitimate and accountable to intervene than outside powers with no attachment to the conflict. (Kuwali 2018, 52, Ero 2016, 175.)

Furthermore, alongside the international, continental and regional peace structures, there exists variety of grassroots level actors whose significant role in the local peacebuilding initiatives is increasingly acknowledged (See Issifu 2016, Leonardsson & Rudd 2015). The diverse local actors are classified by Issifu (2016, 146) as local peace committees, which refer to structures formed at the local level, such as district, municipality, town or village "with the aim of encouraging and facilitating inclusive peace making and peacebuilding processes within a local context" (See Olivier & Odendaal 2008). Furthermore, beyond this classification, a broadening scope of other collective initiatives and organizations has been evolving with argued role in the peacebuilding processes across the continent (See Karbo & Virk 2018). In broad terms, these local grassroots level actors can be defined as non-state and community collectives, which can be utilized to build bridges between society and state (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015, 828). However, due to the extensive number and variety of such actors, including emerging actors[12], the discussion elaborating their detailed characteristics are beyond the scope of this research. While there exist territorial, contextual and case specific differences among conflicts across the continent, the data set addressing the broader discussion over the peacebuilding efforts in Africa enable the mapping of general factors that impose challenges and prospects on the peacebuilding initiatives on the continent. To deepen the analysis of peacebuilding efforts in Africa, the results of this study could be compared to case study analysis of conflicts to find out whether such general perceptions over the characteristics of peacebuilding in Africa are still valid on the more detailed conflict analysis level.

2.2. Challenges for peace and security on the continent

Regardless of the legal and institutional developments to promote democratic governance, peace and security, and socio-economic developments by the AU, the progress has been argued to be slow and fragile especially in terms of implementation of adopted policies and cooperation among member states. (Karbo, 2018, 3–4). The slow development of the AU's capacities to address the issues of peace and security on the continent have been connected to the "lethal combination of weak and

[12] For example, the evolving nature of China-Africa relations has gained increasing popularity in recent discussions on the future of peacebuilding in Africa, see the Crisis Management Initiative's podcast episode "Realignment of global affairs" in http://cmi.fi/2019/12/17/the-realignment-of-global-affairs/.

fledging states with inherited problems, pervasive poverty, and fragile economics that remain largely dependent on former colonial powers, along with a complex web of inherent contradictions within the African state" (Karbo 2018, 4). The importance of the removal of colonial ties and promotion of the "African agency" and in so doing, limit the application of Western global liberal governance in Africa, has been highlighted by Bah (2017, 149) as one of the core objectives of the African Union and its peace and security mechanisms (See also Cilliers & Gnanguênon 2016, 138). However, the heavy reliance over external financial resources questions the legitimacy and mandate of the African Union and the realization of such "African agency" (Kuwali 2018, 55). Furthermore, Ero (2016, 175) argues that institutional differences between the African Union and the United Nations have undermined the implementation of peace operations. One of the challenges highlights the necessity to balance between local ownership, or African agency, and cooperation with outside actors (Ero 2016, 182).

In connection with the challenges faced by the AU, also the African Peace and Security Architecture is criticized from various perspectives in terms of its efficiency. One of the major challenges for the effective performance of APSA is the insufficient resources in terms of its funding, and specifically its continued dependence on external support (Cilliers & Gnanguênon 2016, 149–150). The responsible organ for funding in APSA, the Peace Fund, coordinates the financial contributions from AU's regular budget and voluntary support from member states and other fundraising activities. However, close to 90 per cent of the funding for APSA comes from outside sources, mainly the European Union (EU). (Kuwali 2018, 54). Furthermore, it is argued that one of the defining features of twenty-first century has been the increasing cooperation of different African institutions with international and bilateral actors (Ero 2016, 181). Therefore, the AU's peace and security architecture is heavily dependent on external funding, which contributes to the challenge of gaining African ownership and mandate over the peace and security context in Africa.

It's argued that APSA faces several limitations in terms of its capacities to fulfill its mandate in peace and security management on the continent. In previous missions, APSA has lacked the necessary material and human resources to be effective, hasn't developed clear operational doctrines and includes several institutional weaknesses related to unequal power-sharing by the member states (Kuwali 2018, 47, 54). Furthermore, APSA's performance is limited notably by the lack of political will and cooperation of its member states to engage in military intervention. This stagnant character of APSA has led it to seek assistance from Europe and the United States (US), under the umbrella of the UN or bilaterally. Therefore, creating the political will and engagement to develop more effective

mechanisms for conflict prevention, early rapid response and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding with efficient resource base should be the priority for the member states of APSA in order to overcome the challenges facing its performance. (Kuwali 2018, 47.)

Furthermore, the twofold character of the regional economic communities with a strong position as part of the peace and security architecture has raised critical discussions regarding their performance. While some argue that such character has potential of creating innovative interventions, when peace operations are designed through platforms created originally for economic and social integration, regional organizations have also complicated resolution processes (Ero 2016, 172). It is noted that the above-mentioned proximity to the conflict can complicate and even compromise the neutrality and impartiality of their intervention, especially in cases where the hegemonic state is party to the conflict. (Kuwali 2018, 52–53.) Furthermore, researchers argue that as within the broader framework of the AU, also regional mechanisms and joint leadership requires a high level of trust and understanding between the cooperative states in order to organize coherent entities with similar political, security and economic visions (Kewir & Ngah 2018, 21, Kuwali 2018, 53). Such consensus required to establish a collective security mandate and execute effective responses is argued to be lacking in regional peace mechanisms due to uneven power resources of states, unclear command and mandate structures and undermined regional solidarity. (Kuwali 2018, 53, Ero 2016, 172–173.)

Moreover, it is argued that regional mechanisms impose a challenge of creating a possibility of abusing the power position gained through regional cooperation where regional actors may influence the peace and security environment to suit their national interests (Kuwali 2018, 53, Ero 2016, 172). It is also recognized that in conflicts where state is a party to conflict, regional mechanisms seem to lose their power in terms of providing effective responses. (Kuwali, 2018, 53.) In addition, the intervention norms, mandates and policies vary within different regional communities. For example, the interventionist tradition of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and strong non-interventionist norms of Eastern Africa create evident contradictions to the establishment of Pan-African approach to conflict (Kuwali 2018, 53). Moreover, as the APSA builds its peace and security work upon the cooperation of RECs, the division of areas of responsibility and clear distinction of roles and duties remains a challenge. This calls for strong aspiration by the AU to harmonize the continental peace and security practices for conflict prevention, management and resolution (Kuwali 2018, 53).

To conclude, the African peacebuilding environment includes a number of different level peace and security institutions and actors with a varying degree of success of addressing the challenges faced by the continent (See Francis 2008, 193, Ero 2016 182). The increasing feature of peace and security on the continent is the diversity of actors coming together to mount peace efforts (Ero 2016, 182), where the success of these operations is defined by the ability to overcome the challenges faced by the national, regional and international organizations involved. At the same time, the literature proposes a change in the global landscape where the UN and other Western powers are exerting a stronger role and agency on an ever more confident African continent to take the lead in peace operations. However, while such African-led operations have argued to show remarkable development in various areas, including developing the institutional frameworks and cooperation among the REC's, African Union, United Nations and other international actors and extending the scope of existing peace and security structures, the peace and security landscape in Africa is increasingly complex with multiplicity of actors with various interests. (Francis 2008, 197, Ero 2016, 183.) Drawing from these developments, it is argued that Africa's regions are far from reaching such agency in the field of peace and security envisioned by the African Union. (Ero 2016, 183, Bah 2017, 149.) In addition to the international, national and regional peacebuilding actors, an extensive number of various grassroot level actors play a significant role in peacebuilding practices across the continent. However, due to the multidimensional and extensive amount of such actors, the definition and inclusion of all of them are beyond the scope and possibilities of examination in this thesis. However, as the research aims to analyze the narratives produced about peacebuilding, and not the actors *per se* involved, this limitation to the analysis is not critical.

3. Theoretical framework

An analysis of the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa requires an understanding of the theoretical grounds of different contemporary peacebuilding theories, with a specific emphasis on liberal peacebuilding and its critique. According to Mac Ginty and Firchow (2016, 310) "[t]he liberal peace is taken as the most prominent form of internationally sponsored peace making and peacebuilding.". Therefore, it forms the basis of the analysis. Furthermore, as the focus of the research is to analyze the narratives, the liberal peacebuilding theory offers tools to conceptualize the analysis: "Liberal peace agents often comprise the most powerful actors internationally and nationally and so may be well placed to make sure that their narrative becomes hegemonic." (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016, 310). Therefore, it can be argued that liberal peace theory forms the contemporary peacebuilding paradigm, and its inclusion to the analysis is justified. Moreover, as the research focuses on the narratives about peacebuilding specifically in Africa, a critical branch of peacebuilding theories, the postcolonial peacebuilding, is included in the discussion. This branch includes a variety of criticism directed towards the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding especially on the African continent and with a particular focus on the local turn(s) in peacebuilding literature. The local continues to take an increasingly central position in peacebuilding scholarship (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 425) and therefore offers a valid tool to answer the way the podcast addresses contemporary peacebuilding debates. The chosen theoretical framework and its critical discussion aims to connect and trace the arguments and different nuances made about peacebuilding, peace and African peacebuilding in the *Kujenga Amani* podcast to the contemporary theoretical approaches in peacebuilding research.

The chapter begins with the presentation of contemporary discussions around peacebuilding and its developmental trends. This discussion uses the classification of the evolutional phases of peacebuilding into four generations by Oliver Richmond (2008) and the work of David Roberts (2011) to further elaborate these concepts. Here the third generation of peacebuilding, which is the popularly conceptualized definition of peacebuilding, the liberal peacebuilding is presented. This section defines the basic concepts of peacebuilding and what is meant by it in current discussions. This section elaborates the evolution of liberal peacebuilding theory and the critical approaches that have emerged in reflection of the shortcomings of reaching peace through liberal framework. As a specific group of critique, the postcolonial peacebuilding is presented as a branch of critical peacebuilding that has evolved with the critique of failed peacebuilding efforts specifically on the

African continent. This discussion includes the comparison of liberal peacebuilding theories with critical approaches presented against the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding approach. Finally, the theoretical discussions under scrutiny are summarized in the last section which presents the research addressing the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa.

3.1. Concept of peacebuilding

The evolution of the concept of peacebuilding traces back to the end of the Second World War, when the United Nations (UN) Charter formalized the idea of consensual international intervention in societies in conflict. (Roberts 2011, 7.) This 'first generation' peacebuilding during the Cold War was formed around bipolar antagonism where the peacekeeping operations were subjected only to certain narrow locations with the authorization by the UN Security Council (SC) under Chapter VI (Roberts 2011). The underlying idea was to reflect a realist view of peace that derived from conflict management, where security was produced without open violence by preserving the state and its relations (Richmond 2008, 99). These interventions aimed at impartial and neutral military assistance, for example to create secure environment by deploying military units to monitor ceasefires or oversee other arrangements, with the consent of conflict parties. The fundamental characteristic of the peacekeeping operations was the principle of non-intervention in Article 2(7) of the UN Charter implying that the operation mandates where excluded from the domestic politics. This narrow interpretation of the UN responsibilities on peace and security is significantly different to the concept of peacebuilding characterized today. (Roberts 2011, 7–9, Sriram, Martin-Ortega & Herman 2010, 8–9, Jenkins 2013, 21.)

The 'second generation' of peacebuilding developed the narrow approach further with more complex and wide-ranging interventions that engaged in greater international cooperation, mandate sophistication and technical complexity. This evolution of peacebuilding expanded in terms of quality and quantity while blurring the line between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. (Roberts 2011, 9–10.) This generation of peacebuilding directed the focus more on the individuals by aiming to remove violence, structural violence and injustice (Richmond 2008, 99). This evolution was followed by the 'third generation' of peacebuilding, which represents the approaches characterized by the theoretical frameworks formed around the liberal peace, which will be presented in the following section 3.2. As an evolving critique to the assumptions of liberal peace and the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding theory in achieving peace, the "fourth generation" of peacebuilding is discussed in the section 3.1.2.,

which engages in the critical peacebuilding approaches, including theories of postcolonial peacebuilding. (See Richmond 2008, Roberts 2011.)

Although the term 'peacebuilding' was first formulated by Johan Galtung (1976) the first definite statement of peacebuilding was introduced in the 1992's *Agenda for Peace* by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's reform manifesto. Here the concept was referred to post-conflict peacebuilding as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict." (*Agenda for Peace* 1992, Jenkins 2013, 19.) This concept that was relatively limited in scope was further refined in the 'Supplement' to An Agenda for Peace, issued in 1995, which stressed that "the development of national institutions and the capacity to operate them impartially where necessary for peace to withstand the disruptions that arise in the life of any society." (*Supplement for Agenda for Peace* 1995, Jenkins 2013, 19, Roberts 2011, 7.) The concept evolved to emphasize preventative measures and broaden the perception of peace to include conditions beyond the absence of war or armed conflict, such as social and economic development (Jenkins 2013, 19–20). Furthermore, it is argued that the UN definition of the concept in *Agenda For Peace* established a link between rule of law, transparency of governmental institutions and building a new stable political order. (Sriram, Martin-Ortega & Herman 2010, 9)

Today the practice of peacebuilding has expanded in number, frequency, timing, method and scope to cover a variety of practices (Roberts 2011, 9). The existing literature defines the concept and its technical and normative interpretations differently depending on the context. In general, peacebuilding can be seen as forming the fourth pillar of peace and security alongside preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping (Sriram, Martin-Ortega & Herman 2010, 8, Roberts 2011, 8–9). According to this definition, peacebuilding seeks to "prevent the recurrence of conflict through the provision of technical assistance to transform national structures and capabilities and strengthen new democratic institutions" (Sriram, Martin-Ortega & Herman 2010, 9). Jenkins (2013, 20–21) defines peacebuilding being about "resolving conflicts, but generally attempts to do so either before they erupt into widespread violence, or before those that have erupted recur" with emphasis on the systematic prevention efforts addressing the "root causes" of conflict, such as the economic, social, political and psychological conditions. Therefore, also the tools adopted in peacebuilding include a variety of instruments beyond military action, for example developmental initiatives, reconciliation programs and transitional justice mechanisms (Jenkins 2013, 21).

Moreover, as Veney (2013, 3) points out, the interpretations of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and phases of conflict and post-conflict situations vary in different circumstances and as socially constructed, also mean different things to different people (Roberts 2011, 7). Furthermore, the concepts are often overlapping as peacebuilding processes can, and often do, occur during conflict alongside with peacekeeping operations and after conflict together with post-conflict resolution and reconstruction (Veney 2013, 3). Furthermore Jenkins (2013, 23) argues, that within the 20 years of using the term peacebuilding, the validity of using such fixed ideas of stating when peacebuilding begins and ends has been questioned. In general however, peacebuilding has been used to refer actions taken in the aftermath of conflict (Jenkins 2013, 23). From this perspective, peacebuilding can be seen both as a concept and a strategy adopted by national governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), regional and international intergovernmental institutions (IGOs) (Jenkins 2013) as "means by which the outside world can contribute to the resolution of intrastate conflict and to the reconstruction, or construction, of a culture of peace in post-conflict situation" (Keating & Knight 2004, xxxi).

However, as peacebuilding is an ongoing social process, the ending of conflict and the beginning of post-conflict period is not specified in the contemporary usages of the concept and the international community approaches have argued to include a lack of clarity in the period defined by post-conflict-peacebuilding. (Jenkins 2013, 23, see Chandran, Jones & Smith 2008). The central premise of peacebuilding defined by the international community is based on the idea of sustained peace, where peace is not a naturally occurring phenomenon that can be reached completely, but as a process, that needs to be continuously and consciously constructed and renewed (Jenkins 2013, 1). This leads to a more holistic view of peacebuilding, where peacebuilding is "about preventing the outbreak or recurrence of widespread and systematic violence in the short run, while pursuing longer-term actions to construct the social, economic, and political foundations of lasting peace." (Jenkins 2013, 2). From this perspective, where peacebuilding is referred to mechanisms to build durable or sustained peace, peacebuilding is a process that never actually ends. (Jenkins 2013, 24.)

Although there exists among a number of scholars an agreement that peacebuilding should be perceived as an ongoing and dynamic process, the actual aim of the process and what it is trying to achieve remains contested. This discussion is strongly linked with a broader question of what constitutes peace. (Jenkins 2013, 25.) The work of Johan Galtung, one of the founders of modern peace studies, is often referred to conceptualize the negative and positive conceptions of peace (see Galtung 1996). According to this distinction, negative peace is the absence of direct and systematic

violence and inter-group conflict and positive peace a condition of social justice and pluralism, the absence of structural or cultural violence, in which the causes of conflict are either eliminated or successfully managed through non-violent means (Jenkins 2013, 25). These means are referred as processes of political representation, negotiation and compromise (Jenkins 2013, 25), which form the grounds of democratic form of governance. Partly in line with this perspective, peacebuilding is often understood as being partly political approach that engages with developmental deficits or the political settlement that are presumed to create the root causes of conflict. Here the peacebuilding efforts move beyond technical solutions to conflict to comprehensively engage with the actors affected in a conflict. (Jenkins 2013, 2.) Such underlying partly political approaches in peacebuilding and the overall understandings of peace direct the perceptions and evolution of the concept and its practical adaptations. In short, the perception of peace varies within different peacebuilding theories and is reflected in the construction of their approaches.

This study adopts the broad definition of peacebuilding, which approaches the concept as an ongoing social process with no fixed beginning and ending points and of which meaning ultimately depends on the context and who is defining it, as the concept is a socially constructed (Roberts 2011, 7). The definition of peace varies within different theoretical approaches to peacebuilding and is therefore addressed together with these discussions. However, the previous discussion over different perceptions of peacebuilding connect to the notion of liberal peace and ultimately, the role of governance in peacebuilding. According to Knight (2005, 359):

> "Peacebuilding's ultimate goal is to prevent and/or resolve violent conflicts, create or restore peaceful conditions and lay the foundation and building block for an enduring peace through the strengthening of institutions of governance. This involves both social engineering and the transformation of a society from a culture of violence to a culture of peace."

The liberal peacebuilding theory therefore forms the dominant paradigm in peacebuilding which arguably constructs and shapes both the contemporary peacebuilding discourse and its critique. The development and theoretical underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding is discussed in the following section.

3.2. Liberal peacebuilding

Liberal peacebuilding, often referred as the 'third generation' of peacebuilding by Richmond (2008), formed from the broadening approaches to peacekeeping interventions, where the principles of liberal peace where adapted. The origins of liberal peace trace back to Immanuel Kant, Enlightenment scholar often regarded as the icon of liberal peace, who considered political and economic liberalization as a source of peace within and among states, where peace would naturally grow from communities due to the moral constitution of humanity (Lidén 2011, 59). Such debates in political theory and philosophy formed the grounds for the development of different strands of how to conceptualize the idea of peace and what it means. Therefore, the development of the thinking of liberal peace is derived from the ideas of peace by Enlightenment scholars and strongly embedded in the work of the League of Nations and United Nations approach to peace. (Richmond 2011, 46.)

Today, these foundational principles of liberal peace are formed around the consensus on the idea that "democracy, the rule of law and market economics would create sustainable peace in post-conflict and transnational states and societies, and in the larger international order that they were part of" (Iįguez de Heredia 2017, 2). As the Cold War ended, United Nations (UN) peacebuilding, humanitarian and donor assistance, World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) programming, and national institutions, where focusing on democratization, human rights, development and economic reform to extend the scope of peacebuilding from conflict management and removal of direct violence to (re)construction of collapsed or fragile states, which are referred as "any non-liberal state" subject to conflict (Richmond 2011, 45). According to Richmond (2011, 45) "the liberal peace framework has emerged within a very specific and complex political, economic, social, conceptual, and methodological environment, which nonetheless has universal ambitions".

Liberal peacebuilding often adopts multilevel approaches where a wider range of actors is included to address the conflict dimensions, but still prioritizes top-down, elite-led and official processes. (Richmond 2008, 105.) This is reflected in the perception of peace that is achieved through governance and top-down approaches that derive from liberal-democratic free market frameworks, human rights and the rule of law. The perceptions of peace and its requirements by policy makers, officials and other actors involved in both top-down and bottom-up processes are emphasized in the adopted approaches. (Richmond 2008, 106.) This multidimensional and multilevel approach aims at bringing together local, state and regional aspects of conflicts where liberal institutions are supported together with a vibrant civil society. The fundamental argument of liberal peace states that the conflict

is not fully ‘resolved’ and liberal peace cannot be achieved unless the needs of a functioning civil society are met. According to this view, peacebuilding needs to address political, social, economic and developmental aspects in the broader societal context in order to accomplish liberal peace. (Richmond 2008, 105–106)

Liberal peacebuilding often adopts a perception of peace, which is technically reachable and is constructed by cooperation together with external and local actors. The approach aims at eventually reaching a phase where external actors are not needed and the liberal peace is self-contained. These perceptions are reflected at the multiple level approaches in liberal peace. Furthermore, peace is seen as something that is constructed outside-in where outside actors “import the specialized knowledge, procedures and structures” and where the conflict parties are expected to adapt this process according to their own interests. (Roberts 2008, 106.) Furthermore, liberal peacebuilding perceives the nature of peace as universal, which requires multidimensional and multilevel problem-solving construction, including various forms of intervention such as mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and institutional reforms that meet the international standards (Roberts 2008, 107).

These reforms that are formed around the perception of peace as universal form the core of the technical approaches in liberal peacebuilding. Richmond (2011, 44–45) states that these political, economic and judicial institutional reforms in the areas of political, economic and judicial structures include the promotion of free markers, democratization and elections, the rule of law, access to justice and respect of human rights. Furthermore, he states that there exists a general view, a liberal peacebuilding consensus, among peacebuilding agencies, donors, states, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that democratic, market, and development processes produce a sustainable solution to conflict (Richmond 2011, 44). This liberal peacebuilding consensus reflects the liberal perception of peace where democracy is seen as promoting universal peace and human rights and that capitalism and free markets are most efficient mechanisms of creating prosperity and development while undermining poverty and inequality (Roberts 2011, 1, See Dingwerth & Pattberg 2006, Kaldor 2007). These elements are embedded in the idea of liberal state (Richmond 2011, 45).

In addition, Roberts (2011, 1) argues that liberal peacebuilding is strongly connected with the values and assumptions of global governance, which briefly means the technocratic and impartial means of achieving the values of liberal peace through governance of the local from the global. Global governance entails a view that peacebuilding efforts are conducted through top-down institutionalization, including certain development of state institutions with adoption of the rule of

law and the notion of the separation of powers. (Roberts 2011, 1). Furthermore, according to Knight (2005, 359) the ultimate goal of liberal peacebuilding, preventing and/or resolving violent conflicts and creating or restoring the foundations of sustainable peace, is connected to idea that peace is achieved through the strengthening of institutions of governance.

3.3. Critical approaches to liberal peacebuilding

A growing group of critiques maintain that the liberal peacebuilding approaches to post-conflict context have done more harm than good in the past decades (See Paris 2010, 338, Leonardsson & Rudd 2015, 827, Roberts 2011, Richmond 2008, Mac Ginty 2010). As a reaction to the widely acknowledged shortcomings of the liberal peacebuilding to achieve long-term peace in many post-conflict societies, both in terms of the conceptualization and implementation of liberal peacebuilding and effectiveness and legitimacy of missions (Paris 2010, 337, Paffenholz 2015, 859), a growing branch of critical peacebuilding has evolved. This branch can be seen to include a variety of critical approaches as a response to the critique towards liberal peacebuilding agenda, which are termed by Richmond (2008) as 'fourth generation' peacebuilding. These perspectives are concerned with a broader vision of what peacebuilding might achieve and who are the potential beneficiaries of it as it critically evaluates the nature of peace and the interests of those who try to make it. It reflects the criticism directed towards the failings of liberal peacebuilding, as the approaches of achieving peace in critical peacebuilding theories are more context-specific rather than universalist and based on the everyday needs of people instead of assumptions of particular peace theories. (Richmond 2008, Roberts 2011, 85.) According to Paris (2010, 339) "critical studies of peacebuilding are 'critical' in the sense that they ask probing questions about underlying assumptions that might otherwise be taken for granted."

Moreover, Richmond (2008, 109) argues that the liberal peacebuilding has been criticized with problems of "universal claims, its cultural assumptions, its top-down institutional, neo-liberal and neo-colonial overtones, and its secular and rationalist nature." These aspects have argued to replicate state-centered, or Westphalian, forms of sovereignty as a response to conflict, which can be seen as neo-imperial (Solomon 2015, 48–49, Richmond 2008, 109, Roberts 2011, 3). Furthermore, liberal peacebuilding has been criticized on the grounds that it presents the only available peace (see Sabaratnam 2013, Paris 2010) as it is constructed as the peace of global governance which reflects "the Western concerns about the relationship between security and development long before the

concerns of local people are presented and acted upon." Such peacebuilding approach is not sanctioned as it presents the hegemonic ontology that assumes liberal peacebuilding as the "only answer to global instability whilst disguising its universalizing, assimilative methodology in the rhetoric of 'cosmopolitanism' and 'rights'". (Roberts 2011, 3–4.)

As a reaction to the critique towards the assumptions of the 'third generation' peacebuilding and the liberal peace, Richmond defines the objectives of the critical peacebuilding branch as,

> "[t]he critical strand of a fourth generation implies an emancipatory form of peace that reflects the interests, identities, and needs of all actors, state and non-state, and aims at the creation of a discursive framework of mutual accommodation and social justice which recognizes difference. An everyday, post-Westphalian peace is its aim." (Richmond 2008, 109)

This post-Wesphalian peace can be argued to highlight the political aspect of the peacebuilding process involving power relations, where political and economic resources are distributed among actors involved (Iįguez de Heredia 2017, 1) and the importance of local conceptions of peace, conflict and justice over "universal" liberal peace understanding (See Hyden 2015). Recent critical academic research on peacebuilding suggests that there needs to be a genuine engagement with the local level, actors and agency, with the ambition of countering the universalist tendency of traditional peacebuilding (Mathieu 2018, 1). This 'local turn' in peacebuilding entails concepts such as the inclusion of the local context, local communities and local agency (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015, 825). Such approach criticizes international peacebuilding initiatives, which ignore the local beyond its rhetorical inclusion in policy papers. The critical perspectives of the local turn are discussed more in detail in the section 3.3.2.

Furthermore, liberal peacebuilding is criticized as not being concerned about the relationship between local people and the state it privileges, as it prefers the assumption that "democracy is good for all and what everyone wants" (Roberts 2011, 3). In so doing, liberal peace emphasizes certain aspects of human rights, such as the right to vote, while ignores other aspects of what people might want from peace and aspects that are closer to their everyday realities. Liberal peacebuilding is argued to frame the state around issues that are not central to majority of people and thus undermines the importance of building legitimate relationship between the state and the society upon which stability and peace depend. (Roberts 2011, 3–4.) The international rhetoric of ownership, empowerment and participation inherent in liberal peacebuilding are not truly met according to the critiques, as the

"peace that arrives conforms to external interests, trying to morph the local to the global through the insemination of [l]iberal institution building," (Roberts 2011, 4, See Huges & Pupavac 2005, 883).

Furthermore, Jenkins (2013, 25–26) argues, that most of the criticism towards liberal peacebuilding stems from the underlying premise of liberal peace, that sustainable peace requires the creation of democratic states together with market-based economies. This leads to the assumption that the creation of post-war democratic order should be prioritized and other alternatives, such as authoritarian regimes, tend to reduce the prospects of sustainable peace and increase the risk of conflict-recurrence. Charbonneau (2014, 610) argues, that such criticism towards the core principles of liberal peacebuilding have led some scholars to state that liberal peacebuilding is in crisis, as the liberal peacebuilding missions has been compared to forms of imperialism. The key problem according to Charbonneau (2014, 611) is the liberal nature of Western peacebuilding interventions, where the West claims superiority over how to build peace, progress, development and democracy. Lidén (2011, 61) argues that some scholars consider the non-liberal elements of the outcomes of the peace initiatives as failures of liberal peacebuilding (See Paris 2014, 79–90). Furthermore, the relationship between the Western liberal interveners and non-liberal and non-Western others is seen problematic (Charbonneau 2014, 611).

Such binary divisions of liberal peace such as liberal-illiberal, peace-war, modern-traditional, developed-underdeveloped and civilized-barbaric have argued to represent a wider project of global modernization (Lidén 2011, 58) as:

> "Peacebuilding is per definition supposed to address the root causes of civil war, and in liberal theory these are presented as repression, grievances and opportunities resulting from a lack of functioning or legitimate liberal political and economic institutions."

Such opposing dichotomies can be seen as consolidating the asymmetric power of the global North over the global South as it promotes Western cultures at the expense of other alternative cultures, norms and identities leading to the failure of building a truly liberal peace (Lidén 2011, 57). This criticism is argued to represent liberal peacebuilding as a "form of imperialism in denial" (Lidén 2011, 57, see Paris 2010, 338). As a consequence, the postcolonial peacebuilding literature has evolved to elaborate the proposed influence of the colonial legacy in liberal peacebuilding theory.

3.3.1. Postcolonial peacebuilding

As a specific branch of the critical peacebuilding literature, postcolonial peacebuilding theory is a relevant framework to analyze the narratives produced about African peacebuilding due to the particular perspective on influence of colonialism to the theoretical development of peacebuilding. The theories deconstruct and question the concepts and ideas around peacebuilding efforts in Africa and specifically highlight the power structures and Western domination of contemporary peace and conflict research.

As a branch of critical peacebuilding, postcolonial peace theories suggest that the field of peace studies and conflict resolution developed in the context of a highly politicized environment, where ideological positions dominated the discourse. It is argued that this field reflects the impact of subjective political positions and in particular postcolonialism. (Steinberg 2007, 788.) In general, various scholars, including Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Partha Chatterjee, Phillip Darby and Ilan Kapoor among others, agree that postcolonialism is a field of theories about the conceptualizations and various forms of colonialism, decolonialization and neo-colonialism in the postcolonial world (Lidén 2011, 57). Postcolonial peacebuilding theories imply that the deeply rooted historical context forms the grounds for narratives, positions and responses to interventions and the diverse practices that come under the label of peacebuilding. In addition, this forms postcolonial subjectivity and intersubjective relations in the field of peacebuilding. (Jabri 2016, 154–155.)

According to Lidén (2011) the postcolonial peacebuilding theories are associated with the broader neo-colonial critique of power relations of global politics, where the international community, namely the Western countries, dominate the conceptualization of peace and development, which originate from the colonial legacy:

> "The theoretical underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding rely on colonial logic of development that reduces war-torn societies to states that have fallen from the ladder of human progress and need a cure of 'liberal statebuilding' to get back on track." (Lidén 2011, 57)

Lidén argues further, that liberal peacebuilding missions in post-conflict societies represent is a clear example of the origin of colonial logic of world politics where external actors are presented as legitimate who may "violate internal norms and traditions in the name of peace and development" (Lidén 2011, 69). According to this perspective, peacebuilding practices have roots in imperialism,

where the new logics of organization, and specific practices and power relations formed around them originate from the old forms of intervention (Charbonneau 2014). Furthermore, this underlying premise is argued to disregard and undermine the value and role of alternative social institutions in the conflict contexts (Lidén 2011, 60). Postcolonial theory is seen as a necessary critical tool to deconstruct and replace orientalist depictions and underlying assumptions of the "non-Western other" that is seen as embedded in the liberal peacebuilding orthodox discourse (Lidén 2011, 69).

In the African context as part of the postcolonial critique towards the liberal peacebuilding, a growing group of scholars highlight the importance of indigenous perspective on peacebuilding initiatives in Africa. The idea of African ownership is not new, and dates back to the postcolonial period during the 1960s when most of the African countries gained their independence. One of the earliest scholars to conceptualize the notion of African ownership and control over peace and security on their continent, was Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui (1967, 35), who developed the concept of *Pax Africana* ('African peace') by stating that:

> "For Pax Africana asserts that the peace of Africa is to be assured by the exertions of African themselves. The idea of "Pac Africana" is the specifically military aspect of the principle of continental jurisdiction."

Perhaps controversially, as stemming from the imperialist period of the British Empire, and the concept of *Pax Britannica*, the concept of *Pax Africana* (Mazrui 1967) is argued to exist in the contemporary institutional and ideological framework of the AU, as one of its key objectives is to integrate Africa into a prosperous and peaceful continent, an Africa "driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in [the] global arena" (Karbo 2018, 8). Furthermore, Kewir and Ngah (2018, 22) argue, that in order to improve the success of building sustainable peace in Africa, there is a need to rethink peacebuilding in Africa from a Pan-African perspective. At least on the ideological level, the notion of the necessity of African ownership and responsibility over the continental peace and security challenges has influenced the evolution of the continent's institutional framework (See Karbo & Virk 2018). However, as discussed in the earlier chapter 2.2. about the challenges of peace and security over the continent, the materialization of such ideology in practice is still facing various obstacles.

Nevertheless, the branch of postcolonial peacebuilding emphasizes the indigenous perspective on peacebuilding in Africa, which should be included together with the ideas of external actors. Amaechi (2017) argues, that the colonial history of Africa certainly has an effect on the peacebuilding endeavor

and its shortcomings on the continent, but among other scholars, also considers that such blaming has been exaggerated and formed partly as a "neo-colonial" hindrance in peacebuilding (See also Ero 2013). He suggests that there needs to be a balance of peacebuilding practices, together with external and internal actors in a way that would be sensitive of the local contexts while strengthen the distinctive attributes of particular societies to sustain favorable conditions for peace (Amaechi 2017, 5). Such argument is associated with the conceptualization of peacebuilding by Galtung, whose work was briefly discussed earlier, where peacebuilding is connected to the discovery and preservation of existing peace structures within communities and societies (See Galtung 1976, 1996, Amaechi 2017, 10). Such perspective emphasizes the role of the local knowledge in peacebuilding.

3.3.2. The local turn(s)

The discussed postcolonial critique towards the liberal peacebuilding agenda problematizes the approach from various perspectives, that are based on the perspective that challenges the distinctions of the 'international' and 'local' and the 'liberal' and 'non-liberal other', which lead to the imperialist interpretations of international peacebuilding (Lidén 2011, 57, Charbonneau 2014, 629). As a form of this criticism, a new shift in the international peacebuilding focus labelled as the 'local turn' evolved in the early 1990s as a reaction to the failed UN missions to support sustainable peace for example in Somalia, Rwanda or the Balkans. Furthermore, Bräuchler and Naucke (2017, 430) argue, that the turn of peacebuilding focus to 'identity' and 'culture' resulted from the post-Cold War thinking of conflicts being carried out along religious and ethnic lines. This shift connects to the broader trend at the global level to emphasize grassroots empowerment, fostering civil society and cultural rights. This shift was strengthened by the mere absence or malfunctioning of national jurisdiction which lead to the emphasis of traditional justice systems functioning at the local level. (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 43.) The developed conceptualization of peacebuilding emphasized the importance and priority of local actors and ownership over externally designed and implemented peacebuilding missions, where the underlying idea is that sustainable peace is achieved through the local people affected by the conflict context. As later revitalized in the early 2010s, the 'second local turn' further elaborated the relationships and interaction of the international and local peacebuilding mixtures and local infrastructures of peace. (Paffenholz 2015, 858–859.) According to Paffenholz (2015, 857):

> "These two local turns in peacebuilding represent a fundamental shift away from the liberal peacebuilding project, with its externally driven peace-making and statebuilding agenda. Instead, local turn scholars advocate a central role for local people as agents for peace."

The local turn in peacebuilding therefore promotes the bottom-up peacebuilding approach with the focus on the local level, as an alternative to the traditional top-down, state-level and official led liberal peacebuilding perspective.

As a critical reaction to the evolving peacebuilding approach, the leading scholars of the second local turn, Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver Richmond further conceptualized the idea of turning towards local peace (Paffenholz 2015, 859). According to Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, 780), local turn enables to assess the debate on power, peace and social justice, and ultimately, who are the subjects of peacebuilding missions. This perspective treats local turn as a tool to reconceptualize the act of making peace and importantly, critically assesses Western modes of thinking which dominate the peacebuilding discourse (Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, 780). They define the concept of 'local' as:

> "[T]he range of locally based agencies present within a conflict and post-conflict environment, some of which are aimed at identifying and creating the necessary processes for peace, perhaps with or without international help, and framed in a way in which legitimacy in local and international terms converges. This peace is normally an everyday and emancipatory type, in which authority, rights, redistribution and legitimacy are slowly rethought, and are reflected in institutional and international architecture." (Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, 769)

Therefore, one of the core advantages of the local turn(s) is the broader conceptualization of peace and the targeted subjects of peacebuilding. Perceived as the "everyday peace", the local "seeks to recognize the agency and significance of actors at the sub-state level." (Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016, 309). The local turn is argued to overcome the critique of colonial, superficial and short-lived characteristics of liberal peacebuilding project, which has failed to produce sustainable peace in conflict affected areas.

However, despite the widely acknowledged advantages and empirically proven relevance of the local turn in peace research, also its highly ambitious assumptions have gained criticism. Paffenholz (2015, 858) argues, that the theoretical framework of the local turn problematically constructs the local and the international as binary opposites, which converges the critique towards liberal peacebuilding. The local turn is embedded in the structural fabric of liberal peace (Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, 777),

and therefore the critique towards liberal peace can be argued to be reflected also in the local turn. Consequently, the notion of "hybrid peace" (Mac Ginty Mac 2014, 2010, Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 430–431) perceives the local peacebuilding as part of liberal peacebuilding approaches and not as a separate theoretical framework.

Moreover, the critique has highlighted that such essentialist division between the liberal and the local has led to the main contradictions and challenges of the local turn debates, where the local and international are presented as the only relevant locations of power or resistance. Furthermore, this logic leads to problems of ignoring alternative levels and locations of power, flawed interpretations of the hybrid peace governance structures, dominant role of local elites and overstatement of local resistance. The result is an ambivalent relationship to practice. (Paffenholz 2015, 857.) Furthermore, critiques have problematized the role of the assumed 'local' as the empowerment of local subjects to act within the liberal project mainly puts them into a position to strengthen the liberal peacebuilding agenda. In other words, the aim of truly empowering and emancipating local actors has been challenged (Randazzo 2016, 1353.) Therefore, the highly ambitious aims of providing alternative solutions for the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding, also the local turn has been criticized and even its role as a distinct 'alternative' to liberal peacebuilding proposed under discussion.

Furthermore, Bräuchler and Naucke (2017) and Hirblinger and Simons (2015) elaborate the ambivalence of the local in peacebuilding and argue for the importance of analyzing the meanings of the local in conflict and peace studies. They argue, that the 'local' is conceptualized, imagined and operationalized in various settings across the globe by local, national and international actors, which challenge both the dominating international peace paradigms, i.e. the global peace industry, and notions of 'local peacebuilding' (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 422, Hirblinger & Simons 2015). Therefore, the local turn(s) is contextualized as part of the changing global conflict ideology where traditional political structures and approaches to peacebuilding are revived and reinvented. Such turn towards the 'local' is also connected to processes of decolonization, decentralization and nation-building as opposed to processes of globalization. (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 423.)

As a reaction to the evolving critique in local peacebuilding, Lidén (2011, 67) proposes an alternative normative approach that aims to locate between the discussions about shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding and its supposed alternative local turn as a peacebuilding with "the right kind of liberal-local-hybridity". This 'social peacebuilding' draws attention to supporting material resources and security for enabling local peacebuilding initiatives to build capacities for non-violent conflict

resolution where social and political inclusion is at is a core value. Here the liberal-local balance is represented as realizing internationally recognized norms, such as democracy and human rights, through practices that harmonize these norms through the local perception. In other words, the democratic political measures are built through locally and politically representative structures with the support of local peacebuilding mechanisms. (Lidén 2011, 67.) By focusing on the social movements created by local peacebuilding initiatives the establishment of representative state institutions is more achievable (Lidén 2011, 68). According to Lidén (2011, 67) this leads to democratization as seen from inside the conflict environment, instead of prescribing it exclusively from the outside.

3.4. Overview of the theoretical framework

This chapter has discussed the characteristics of the traditional and dominant peacebuilding theory, liberal peacebuilding together with an overview of the critical responses evolved as a reaction to the failures of liberal peacebuilding missions, with a specific focus on postcolonial critique and the turn to the local peace. However, as discussed earlier, the critique towards the failures of liberal peace are multidimensional and include a variety of critical perspectives, the criticism has not reached a consensus on whether to replace or 'move beyond' the liberal peacebuilding or whether to reform the existing approaches within the liberal peacebuilding framework, in other words, develop the liberal peacebuilding approaches further. Paris (2010, 362) argues, that the fundamental challenge of contemporary peacebuilding is in fact the latter, on how to develop and adapt the peacebuilding practices according to the mostly credited critique of liberal peacebuilding. According to him, there is "no realistic alternatives to some form of liberal peacebuilding strategy" and that the critique directed towards liberal peacebuilding in fact presents variations of liberal peacebuilding and not alternatives of it as they claim (Paris 2010, 339). In other words, the alternative strategies introduced by the liberal peace critiques adopt liberal principles in their approaches (Paris 2010, 339, See Mac Ginty 2008). This does not deny the justifications of the critique and on the contrary, acknowledges the crucial role of it helping to understand the 'prevailing order' around the liberal peacebuilding and how this order is reproduced, including in the realm of peacebuilding (Paris 2010, 340).

Moreover, Paris (2010, 338–339) argues that also the critical peacebuilding demands self-criticism and argues that during the recent years, a "hypercritical" school of scholars has emerged who present an exaggerated view of the shortcomings and negative characteristics of liberal peacebuilding, where

it is seen as fundamentally destructive or illegitimate and representing a form of Western or liberal imperialism:

> "But observing that there are echoes of colonialism in peacebuilding is quite different from asserting their equivalence. Not only is the colonialism-peacebuilding analogy overstated, but it also serves to discredit and delegitimize peacebuilding by establishing an 'interpretive frame' in which these missions are portrayed as exploitative, destructive, and ultimately disreputable forms of international intervention and assistance." (Paris 2010, 350)

Furthermore, Paris (2010, 338) calls for clarification and rebalancing of the contemporary criticism directed towards the failures and prospects of liberal peacebuilding and argues that the critique towards liberal peacebuilding points to larger unresolved questions, including the conceptualization of peacebuilding success and the meaning of the peace that is tried to be achieved (Paris 2010, 364). In conclusion, the universalist and Western-driven assumptions of liberal peacebuilding theory have raised a significant branch of critique which in many dimensions is agreed to be justified in the reflection of the reality of failed peace missions. The critical school of peacebuilding theorists continue to evolve and raise justified and necessary questions of the contemporary peacebuilding efforts to improve the peaceful conditions in various contexts. However, even the critical school seems to have contradictive stands over the content and justification of the critique, which further adds to the ongoing demand of critical assessment of peacebuilding practices and underlying agendas and perceptions of achieving sustainable peace in order to improve peacebuilding work.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework set up for the analysis in this research are far from exhaustive and set acknowledgeable limits to the scope of the analysis. The multidimensional analysis of the data limits the scope of the analysis to the selected theoretical framework and therefore other methodological decisions would most likely induce different results. However, the adopted theoretical framework to analyze the data reflects the contemporary discussions evolving in peace and conflict studies, and therefore arguably offer justified theoretical tools for the aspired multidimensional analysis that aims to elaborate on some of the current nuances in the contemporary peacebuilding discussions in the African context through the chosen analysis case, the *Kujenga Amani* podcast. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology by first presenting the case study *Kujenga Amani* podcast, and then introducing the qualitative narrative analysis, that is adopted to elaborate the narratives produced about peacebuilding in Africa.

4. Research design and methodology

Narrative analysis of a single case study forms the grounds of the research design and methodology of this study. In this chapter I will first discuss the choice of the dataset that forms the case study. This includes introducing the context, background and content of the data set as well as a brief examination of locating the podcast series in the broader field of media studies. The section contextualizing the data set is followed by a discussion on the narrative analysis which forms the core methodological approach of this research to analyze data. This discussion includes a deeper examination of the epistemology of narrativity and the grounds of choosing this analysis methodology for this study. The section presenting the theoretical foundations of narrative analysis is followed by a discussion on the specific take of the narrative analysis adopted in this research. Furthermore, this section presents the construction of the research design that uses thematic analysis as the first stage to process the data into the form of themes that can be analyzed further. Therefore, the analysis process combines the two qualitative methods in which thematic analysis identifies themes arising from the data set and narrative analysis forms the narratives through the themes. This section includes the discussion of the epistemology and usages of thematic analysis as part of narrative analysis. The final outcome of the analysis is the production narratives from the podcast series that reflect peacebuilding in Africa. Lastly, the positionality of the researcher is discussed together with evaluation of the scope and limitations of this research. This discussion includes the ethical considerations related to this study.

4.1. *Kujenga Amani* podcast series

The African Peacebuilding Network represents a type of media platform which aims to promote particular perspectives about peacebuilding on the African continent. It states its agenda as promoting African perspectives on peacebuilding and broadening the African knowledge on the international level and global policy. Therefore, the agenda is political in nature. However, as Sparks (2013, 128) argues, the aim of "de-westernizing" media studies has so far not been successful: academia and scholars largely obtain their education in the US and Europe and often remain to pursue their careers. The developmental challenges, including inadequate funding, political restrictions and linguistic disadvantages, in many parts of the world contribute to the inability of producing equivalent platforms of for research and information production (Sparks 2013, 129). The location of African Peacebuilding Network in the US with US based funding and the institution's staff and interviewee's connections to

US and Europe impose critical assessment of the information produced and labeled as promoting African perspectives.

In order to contextualize the specific character of the *Kujenga Amani* podcast as a form of media platform and to explore the ways this type of dataset can be analyzed, media studies will be briefly discussed next. As an academic discipline, media studies focus on the role of media in the society: its content, history, various forms and usages, specifically the mass media. Critical media studies is a branch of media studies which analyzes the way mass media produces and distributes information in time and space. Ott and Mack (2013, 14) argue that the content of mass media socializes people to perceive the world from a certain perspective, as some information is included to the exclusion of others. Furthermore, mass media frames the content through a certain perspective, which makes people adopt particular attitudes toward the information that is presented (Ott & Mack 2013, 14). Kraidy (2018, 338) argues that the critical perspective on media studies highlights the importance of addressing the power-relations with constant re-assessment of our practices and increasing public engagement with the use of critical theories, including postcolonial theories and discourse critique. This agenda contributes to the increasing need to improve the understanding of the current world with political, economic, environment and security complexities (Kraidy 2018, 337).

Furthermore, critical media studies involve the analysis of different communication technologies of mass media and how the specific medium characteristics affect the way messages and information is distributed. In addition, the media platform and communication technology influence the way people process media content and messages. Interpretations and understandings of information vary depending whether the message is distributed through language or images. (Ott & Mack 2013, 15.) Therefore, people interpret messages distributed through television or radio differently: in podcasts the person interprets and processes the information through speech and therefore focuses on analyzing language without visual information. Therefore, the quality of the information produced through the *Kujenga Amani* podcast has a distinct character inherent for audio material which is expressed through English language.

The word “podcast” is a portmanteau of “pod”, derived from the Apple’s iPod, and “broadcast”, to illustrate the combination of characteristics of traditional and new media as obscuring the notions of “public” and “private” (Kim, Lee & Park 2016, 42–43). The unit of analysis, the *Kujenga Amani* (“building peace” in Swahili) podcast produced by the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council, forms the case study of this research. According to Levy (2008, 2) case

study can be defined as an interpretation and evaluation of spatially and temporally bounded set of events, that can be theoretically defined. In order to identify case studies within the topic under inquiry, the researcher must ask "what is this case of?" in order to establish different aspects of the topic that form the case studies. In terms of this research, the topic of peacebuilding in Africa forms the case, and the podcast series addressing different aspects on the topic form a single case study that is a particular analytically defined aspect of the case (Levy 2008, 2–3). According to the categorization by Levy (2008), this study adopts the idiographic and theory-guided case study where the aim is to describe, explain and interpret a set of data with a designed theoretical framework that structures the process. The case study is an end itself as opposed to a vehicle for producing generalized theories beyond the data. Here the theoretical framework guides the focus on particular theoretically interesting aspects of the case while neglecting others. (Levy 2008, 4.)

The *Kujenga Amani* podcast provides me with an accessible and relatively recent source of material that addresses the contemporary peacebuilding activities on the African continent through the opinions expressed by influential and well-known scholars, policy makers and practitioners. Moreover, as podcasts are becoming increasingly used form of media and communication platform across to globe by various public and private actors, the demand for critical analysis of the usages of such platforms increases. The topic is widely addressed from various perspectives in literature and policy work, but partly due to this overabundance and complexity, my aim was to examine material that is easily accessed and consumed by wider audiences beyond the academia and policy world. This approach also contributes to my interest of examining information and knowledge production in public discussions in peace and conflict studies. The *Kujenga Amani* podcast bridges the gap between theory and practice in terms of producing podcast series about the topic that can be accessed by people across the world as it's available on the Internet and possible to be downloaded to a personal audio player. Moreover, the African Peacebuilding Network is present in various platforms of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Flickr. Therefore, it can be argued that the podcast has the possibility of reaching a variety of audiences and have an effect on the perceptions over peacebuilding in Africa.

The African Peacebuilding Network is a program established by the Social Science Research Council in 2012. It "supports independent African research on conflict affected countries and neighboring regions of the continent, as well as the integration of African knowledge into global policy communities." (The Social Science Research Council 2019a). The African Peacebuilding Network provides platforms for information exchange and discussion in order to promote African perspectives

on peacebuilding. As a project of the African Peacebuilding Network, *Kujenga Amani* is a digital forum of information exchange on peacebuilding in Africa, which connects researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and organizations working in the field of African peacebuilding (The Social Science Research Council 2019b). The African Peacebuilding Network is funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York, which is an American grantmaking foundation established in 1911 by Andrew Carnegie "to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding" in the following focus areas: international peace, the advancement of education and knowledge, and democracy (Carnegie Corporation of New York 2019). In addition to the podcast series, the African Peacebuilding Network provides as part of its program components individual and collaborative working group research fellowships to promote its broader agenda "to advance African debates on peacebuilding and promote African perspectives" (The Social Science Research Council 2019a). The African Peacebuilding Network sets a strong emphasis on the promotion of the concept of African perspectives and knowledge within the discussions regarding the field. This way of addressing the African continent as a homogenous entity is adopted by the organization itself. However, such approach of presenting Africa through generic references or as a single country has received abundant postcolonial critique especially in terms of its colonial overtones which reduce the vast diversity on the continent (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005).

The podcast series contains five episodes, lasting from 15 minutes to 35 minutes, with actors in the field of peacebuilding in Africa: scholars, policy makers and practitioners. The interviews were recorded between July and November 2018 and the podcast was launched in July 2018. As of February 7th, 2020 the following statistics were received from the staff of the Social Science Research Council[13]:

[13] The statistics were provided by Line Sidonie Talla Mafotsing, the Communications and Editorial Assistant of the African Peacebuilding Network & Next Generation Social Sciences of the Social Science Research Council.

Table 1: The number of unique downloads of the Kujenga Amani podcast

Episode	Number of unique downloads:
1. Macharia Kamau	258
2. Séverine Autesserre	205
3. Paul D. Williams	297
4. Lena Slachmuijlder	194
5. Monde Muyangwa	360
Total:	1 314

The downloads per episode vary between 194 (Lena Slachmuijlder) to 360 (Monde Muyangwa) which implies that there are differences among the scope and influence of the specific episodes. However, as the downloads of episodes do not tell about whether the episodes have been listened to completely or partly the numbers are presented to give an indication of the scope representation of the data. Therefore, it can be argued that by the time of receiving the data statistics (7.2.2020), the data is limited to relatively restricted group of audience. However, the numbers may increase as long as the podcast series is available online. Moreover, the APN is planning to continue the podcast series in the future by more episodes[14]. Therefore, the influence and scope of the data set may be evolving and changing in the future as the podcast continues.

The first interviewee is Macharia Kamau, who is the principal secretary in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Kenya since 2018, has served as an ambassador and permanent representative of Kenya to the United Nations since 2010 and co-chair of open working group on sustainable development goals and co-facilitator of intergovernmental negotiations on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. He has served in various positions in different UN agencies, including UNDP, UNICEF and UN advisory groups. His work has gained international recognition in environmental diplomacy and consensus building in sustainable development goals. In 2016 he was appointed chairman to UN Peacebuilding Commission. He holds undergraduate degree in history and economics from College

[14] The statement was provided by Line Sidonie Talla Mafotsing, the Communications and Editorial Assistant of the African Peacebuilding Network & Next Generation Social Sciences of the Social Science Research Council by email inquiry.

of Wooster and master's degree in social policy and planning from Harvard University. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kenya 2020.)

The second interviewee is Séverine Autesserre, a researcher and professor of political science, specializing in international relations and African studies at Barnard College, Columbia University USA. Her areas of academic interest include war, peace, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid and African politics, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She has published a number of internationally recognized articles and is the author of the award-winning books *Peaceland* and *The Trouble With the Congo* and her forthcoming book *The Frontlines of Peace: An Insider's Guide to Changing the World* will be published in March 2021. Before her academic career, she has also worked for humanitarian and development agencies. (Columbia University 2020.)

The third interviewee is Paul D. Williams who is a professor of international affairs and associate director of the security policy studies M.A. program at the Elliot School of International Affairs at George Washington University. His academic areas of expertise include peace operations, emerging security threats, war and peace dynamics in Africa and conflict resolution. He has published extensively on the peace and security architecture of the African Union, including the books *War and Conflict in Africa* and *the Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*. He manages The Providing for Peacekeeping project, and independent research project which analyses the factors that encourage or discourage states for contributing to UN peacekeeping operations. He has worked at the International Peace Institute in New York and at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. (The George Washington University 2020a.)

The fourth interviewee is Lena Slachmuijlder, a peace and social change expert who has worked in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. She has multidimensional background as a journalist, editor, human rights defender, director, producer, performing artist, cultural facilitator, trainer and program manager. She graduated from Stanford University in 1990 and travelled to South Africa during the transition to democracy to become a reporter for anti-apartheid newspaper. She continued working with several media organizations in Africa until 2001, when she joined Search for Common Ground, an international non-profit that uses dialogue, participatory, media and community-based approaches to promote peace, social cohesion and conflict transformation. Currently, she serves as a senior vice president of programs at the Search for Common Ground, where the focus areas include repatriation, sexual violence, governance, elections, security sector reform, and regional cohesion. (Search For Common Ground 2020.)

The last interviewee is Monde Muyangwa, who is the director of the Africa Program at the Woodrow Wilson Center. She leads policy-oriented programs focusing on four thematic areas: 1) inclusive governance and leadership, 2) conflict management and peacebuilding, 3) trade, investment and sustainable development and 4) Africa's evolving role in the global arena. The programs are designed for developing "stronger and mutually-beneficial US-Africa relations; and challenge the dominant narrative about Africa by enhancing knowledge and understanding about the continent in the United States". Prior to joining the Wilson Centre, she has worked at the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, at the National Summit of Africa, and at the New Mexico Highland University. She holds a Ph.D. in international relations from the University of Oxford. (Woodrow Wilson Center 2020.)

As the field of peacebuilding in Africa is extensive with a variety of actors, it is interesting to assess discussion is to assess how the selection process of the interviewees was conducted. This connects to the broader discussion on power politics and media on whose voice is heard and whose is silenced. When I contacted the APN to inquire background details and statistics (see table 1.) about the podcast production, the following answers were received[15]:

> "The majority of guests are selected from the following categories: practitioners, policy makers, and scholars. These interviews are recorded in New York or in neighboring regions such as Washington DC. In the future, the APN will start conducting interviews outside of the US, more particularly in Africa. […] Potential guests are identified through personal contact, recommendations, or direct interaction at meetings/conferences." (Mafotsing 2020)

Therefore, the interviewees are selected through a specific network of actors formed around the APN and SSRC located primarily in the US. This is illustrated also by the connections to Carnegie Corporation and Woodrow Wilson Center by some of the selected guests. The African Peacebuilding Network, Séverine Autesserre and Monde Muyangwa all receive funding from the Carnegie Corporation[16] and both Paul D. Williams and Monde Muyangwa work or have previously worked for the Woodrow Wilson Center[17]. As such the opinions expressed in the podcast are presented from a limited perspective but can be argued to form a part of the dominating discourse of the "West" where

[15] The statement was provided by Line Sidonie Talla Mafotsing, the Communications and Editorial Assistant of the African Peacebuilding Network & Next Generation Social Sciences of the Social Science Research Council by email inquiry.
[16] See more details about the Carnegie Corporation of New York (2019)
[17] See more details about the Woodrow Wilson Center (2020b)

certain power positions enable the defining and conceptualizing of the peacebuilding than others (See Charbonneau 2014). It should be also noted that the APN states a disclaimer about the views and stands of the guests not necessarily representing the views of the APN (SSRC 2019b, 2019b). However, as the podcasts are created by the APN to produce information about peacebuilding in Africa, in addition with its direct agenda of raising "critical voices in the field of peacebuilding in Africa", the way specific themes and opinions are addressed constitute the overall perceptions of the APN as a whole.

To summarize the discussion above, critical media studies calls for the critical assessment of information production in the contemporary complex world with a growing number of various media platforms that are increasingly accessible to wider audiences. At the same time the need for critical assessment of power and quality of information needs to be assessed with critical theories and re-assessment of practices and positionality. Furthermore, along with these developmental trends, the critical evaluation of knowledge produced by various experts becomes increasingly crucial. The analysis of the expert interviews of the *Kujenga Amani* podcast contributes to this growing demand of critical analysis of information production. As the podcasts can be approached as specific perceptions, narrations, over issues affected by the subjective experiences of the experts, the narrative analysis serves as a useful tool to analyze the content of the produced information.

4.2. Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is a qualitative research method that allows the study of perceptions and experiences of people in written or verbal form of expression. The word narrative is derived from Latin to signify passing of knowledge by one who knows (Kreiswirth 2000, 304) and the Latin noun *narratio* means a story and the verb *narrare* to tell or narrate (Heikkinen 2002, 16). Narrative tradition has long roots in philosophy, literacy science and linguistics. Although the role of narratives as part of knowledge production has always been acknowledged, the increasing interest towards narratives expanded in the 1990s as part of a cultural shift referred as the narrative turn. This cultural shift has broadened the use of narrative research to other areas of social sciences. (Heikkinen 2002, 16). The narrative turn is connected with both the paradigm shift of realism to constructivism[18] and cultural

[18] Berger and Luckmann (1985) introduced the term social construction in their work *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge* by theorizing the sociology of knowledge production; how knowledge forms and how it is preserved and altered in a society. The analysis adopted in this thesis grounds to the social constructivist epistemology which intersects with the narrative analysis approach.

shift from modernism to post-modernism (Heikkinen 2010, 143–148, Berger & Luckmann 1985). As a research method, narrative analysis is often adopted due its capacity to reveal different and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning, compare different interpretations with one another and to examine individual and social change. Narrative analysis enables to study how information and stories are produced and structured and who produces them and why. Moreover, by focusing on the narrative, the mechanisms how they are consumed, silenced, contested or accepted can be analyzed. (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou 2008, 1–2.), Furthermore, narrative analysis enables to examine how and why a certain outcome came about (Polkinghorne 1995, 19). Because of this potential, narrative analysis is applicable for research on controversial and contested topics where multiple perceptions and views are present. Studying the narratives produced about a certain topic by specific actors can help us to describe and understand the complexities and interconnections that are often present in social and political contexts.

In general, narrative analysis focuses on the ways in which people make and use stories to interpret the world, does not treat narratives as stories that transmit a set of facts about the world, and is not primarily interested in whether stories are true or not. It views narratives as social products that are produced by people in the context of specific social, historical and cultural locations. (Lawler 2002, 242.) Therefore, it is suitable tool to analyze the podcast and its earlier discussed unique character as a media source of information. Narrative research, and narrativity, is generally associated with the constructivist view of knowing, according to which a knowing subject creates his or her knowledge about the reality on the basis of his or her previous experiences and knowledge (Heikkinen 2002, 16–17). The person forms the knowledge he or she has on the perceptions and interpretations of the reality through subjective previous experiences and social interactions with others. The constructivist concept of knowledge presents the nature of knowledge as relative, which is constantly changing as the surrounding reality changes. From this perspective, knowledge is dependent upon the subjective position of the observer to time, place and context. (Heikkinen 2002, 17, Berger & Luckmann 1985.)

Narrativity is also associated with post-modern concept of knowledge, which questions the traditional objectivist concepts of reality where claims can be proven true or false. The post-modern thought rejects the modernist notion of universal knowledge that can be generalized and considered as value-free, as cognition is always contextualized and therefore dependent of the subjective experiences in certain social and physical environment. (Heikkinen 2010, 146, Heikkinen 2002, 17–18, Berger & Luckmann 1985.) Furthermore, the post-modern approach to knowledge has enabled marginalized groups to detach themselves from the often dominating and suppressing “grand narratives”

(Heikkinen 2010, 147). With this respect, according to the principles of narrative research also this thesis represents a contextual knowledge based on the subjective experiences of the researcher, a narrative product, rather than objective truth about the reality.

De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015, 3) argue that narratives shape and are shaped by the context where they are being produced: by ideologies, social relations and social agendas. These settings vary within communities, times and spaces. (See Berger & Luckmann 1985.) In addition, the language within the context affects the way narratives are produced: experience and subjectivity are articulated through the existing vocabulary and therefore are also limited by them (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou 2008, 9). Furthermore, narratives create also new contexts by elaborating different perceptions and understandings of the world. The process involves altering power relations between different actors and creating new perceptions of practices. (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2015, 3.) Polkinghorne (1995, 11) further argues, that human action is the product of the interaction of a person's previous and present experiences, but also the proposed goals and purposes. This notion implies that also the future affects the formation of the narrative as it reflects person's prospective aspirations and goals.

Polkinghorne (1995, 6–7) divides research material in three different forms; 1) numerical form; 2) short answer form and 3) the form of a narrative. The narrative form can be extended to refer any kind of material that is in the form of natural discourse or speech. This definition includes the data from field notes, original interview data and their written transcriptions. Through this definition, the use of narratives can be employed with the analysis of everyday and natural linguistic expressions with contextual connection to the person producing the data. (Polkinghorne 1995, 6.) Narrative inquiry has gained increasing interest among qualitative researchers in the past few decades. In qualitative research literature the term narrative is often associated with texts that are thematically organized by plots. However, qualitative researchers have also adopted narrative analysis in other forms of texts to employ the term narrative to signify a variety of meanings. (Polkinghorne 1995, 5.) This study adopts the use of narratives to produce specific outcomes which describe the peacebuilding context in Africa in narrated form. The justification for the use of narrative analysis can be reasoned through its character:

> "The power of a storied outcome is derived from its presentation of a distinctive individual in a unique situation, dealing with issues in a personal manner." (Polkinghorne 1995, 18)

According to the post-modernist and constructionist approach, the contextually build experiences of people are presented in the form narratives regardless of their thematic structure. Lawler (2002, 242) argues that focusing on the narrative can be specifically useful way to conceptualize the kinds of accounts people produce in qualitative research.

Bruner (1985) identifies two types of narrative inquiry: the analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. The first one defines research that examines material in the form of narratives or stories and produces categories of such as a result. The second one focuses on data that contains actions, events, and happenings, and where the analysis produces narratives or stories of such data. This study adopts the method of narrative analysis where the experiences, perceptions and opinions of the interviewees are examined in order to compile new narratives formed by them. Therefore, the study produces a storied outcome of the research which is a narrative explanation of the topic of the inquiry, peacebuilding in Africa (Polkinghorne 1995, 19), which is well suited with the character of the podcast series as a data set.

In addition, Squire (2008, 41) categorizes narrative research in terms of its approach to narratives: whether to examine narratives as stories of events or as stories of experience. This study adopts experience-centered narrative research which entails a more socially and culturally directed research framework, implying that information is presented differently in different social contexts, and is defined by theme rather than structure (Squire 2008, 41, 43). Experience-centered approach is part of what Georgakopoulou (2006, 123) refers as a "second wave of narrative analysis" that has "moved from the study of narrative as text (first wave) to the study of narrative-in-context". Therefore, the interview context affects the way the interviewer-interviewee interaction produces the information over the theme; where and when the topic was addressed, who were talking about it and what is the assumed audience it is produced for. However, here it must be acknowledged, that the podcast is an edited version of the original interviews, and therefore the African Peacebuilding Network forms a significant part of the narrated outcomes by controlling the interview dynamics, content and final outcome. This emphasizes the role of the assumed audience, for who the podcast is made for.

Heikkinen (2002, 16) defines four uses of narrative in scientific discussions: 1) as a presumption of the process of knowing and the nature of knowledge as associated with constructivist approach to knowledge; 2) a form of data; 3) a method of analysis and 4) a practical tool. This study adopts the use of narrative as a method of analysis to process the data in order to interpret it through meaningful

narratives. In addition, the use of narrative is framed around the presumption that people construct their knowledge through narratives (Heikkinen 2010, 146).

As the aim of this research is to analyze the narratives produced by the podcast series as a whole, also the narratives produced by the interviewer are examined. The narratives produced in the interviews are affected by the interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee and involve co-construction of narratives (Patterson 2008, Squire 2008, 41). The questions formulated by the interviewer guide the responses given by the interviewees and therefore the narratives produced can be seen as the result of synthesis of sub-narratives during the interaction in the interview. The narrative is located in interviewer-interviewee interaction as well as interviewees' words (Squire 2008, 42). The narrative is therefore formed from the whole interview and the podcast series a wider representational formation of the narratives of separate interviews (Squire 2008, 49). This approach is included also in the first stage of analysis with identifying themes. The adopted thematic analysis searches themes or patterns across the entire data set, rather than within an individual interview (Braun & Clarke 2006, 81). The final outcome of the analysis is therefore a narrative or narratives produced by the podcast series as a whole.

4.3. Thematic analysis

As discussed above, thematic analysis forms the first stage of analysis to identify themes that are further analyzed through narrative analysis. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method across a range of epistemologies that identifies, analyzes, organizes and describes themes, or patterns, found within research material (Nowell et al. 2017, 2, Braun & Clarke 2006, 79). In qualitative analysis, theme identification has been characterized as one of the most fundamental tasks in the analysis process (Ryan & Bernard 2003, 85). Furthermore, thematizing meaning is argued to be one of the few shared aspects among different qualitative methods (Sundler et al. 2019, 734, Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013, 399). Therefore, thematic analysis is commonly regarded as the foundational method for qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006) and is often adopted together with other qualitative methods to assist researchers in analysis (Nowell et al. 2017, 2). Thematic analysis is argued to be a useful method for examining the perspectives of different actors, examining differences and similarities between them and elaborating unexpected views. Moreover, thematic analysis provides tools to find key features and distinctive characteristics from large data sets. (Braun & Clarke 2006, 80–81, King 2004, Nowell et al. 2017, 2.)

Clarke and Braun (2013, 120) argue that thematic analysis is theoretically flexible in the sense that it is not associated with any specific theoretical framework, and therefore it can be applied to a variety of research interests, including those about people's understandings of certain experiences or constructions of particular phenomena in particular contexts. This theoretical independence allows analysis of variety of data material, from secondary sources such as media to transcripts of interviews (Clarke & Braun 2013, 120). As thematic analysis can be applied in research involving constructivist epistemology (Berger & Luckmann 1985), it is compatible with the use of narrative analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, 78).

However, the flexibility of thematic analysis includes also disadvantages in terms of its practical applications. The lack of methodological literature on thematic analysis and absence of sufficient descriptions and guidelines around thematic analysis may lead to inconsistency and lack of coherence in themes that are identified from the data (Nowell et al. 2017, 2, Braun & Clarke 2006, 78, Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013). Ryan and Bernard (2003, 88) approach themes as conceptual linking expressions that can be linked to abstract constructs in various ways. Moreover, as themes come from both the data and the researcher's theoretical understanding of the topic under inquiry, the analytical process is dependent from the context in which the analysis is conducted: agreed professional definitions found in literature; from local, commonsense constructs; from researchers' values, theoretical orientations and personal experiences (Bulmer 1979, 653–656, Strauss 1987, Maxwell 1996). Similarly, as with narrative analysis, thematic analysis involves construction of particular outcomes in the form of themes in certain time, space and environment with particular past experiences and perceptions over the topic and with future agendas and motives affecting the outcome. Therefore, in order to minimize the disadvantages of the flexibility of thematic analysis, methodological and theoretical decisions need to be outlined throughout the analysis to clarify the context in which the outcomes are produced.

4.4. Analysis of the data

The preliminary step of the overall analysis process was to listen and transcribe the podcast series. This was followed by the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006) for thematic analysis to identify and construct the themes from the data set. From this, narrative analysis is adopted to construct the narratives from the identified themes. At this stage, theories are developed and tested to themes to

give predictive explanations of the stories. As the interviews in the podcast series were not conducted by me and the topics addressed in the interviews cover a variety of areas beyond the scope of this analysis, the study adopts primarily a theory driven and deductive approach to identify the relevant aspects from the data with the use of selected theories relevant to answer the research questions. Elements from data-driven approach are included in cases where surprising and unpredictable findings are identified which may contradict the theoretical grounds. (Alasuutari 2011.) These analytical decisions are based on the fact that this research does not aim to test any specific hypotheses that would propose theory-based approach, as the aim is rather to explore what the data entails in reflection to specific theoretical underpinnings. This stage corresponds many qualitative procedures, for example thematic content analysis which is adopted here (Squire 2008, 50). The further narrative analysis depends on how the 'narrative' is defined. Polkinghorne (1995, 5) defines narrative as "the type of discourse composition that draws together diverse events, happenings, and actions of human lives into thematically unified goal-directed processes". However, in the general extension of the term, narrative has been used to signify primary linguistic expressions for instance data in the form of field notes or interview data and their written transcriptions (Polkinghorne 1995, 6). This research adopts the extended definition of the narrative as it's based on the assumption that qualitative inquiries are concerned essentially with linguistic expressions rather than decontextualized phrases that are abstracted from their sources (Polkinghorne 1995, 6). The adopted narrative analysis follows the guidelines by Polkinghorne (1995). The final outcome of the analysis aims to produce narratives, or narrated explanations of the topic of inquiry, peacebuilding in Africa.

4.4.1. Forming the themes

The analysis begins by using thematic analysis that is theoretically positioned within the constructivist epistemology. The adopted method in thematic analysis is used in this study to find repeated patterns of meaning in the data (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson & Palmér 2019, 734). The structure of the thematic analysis adopted in this study follows loosely[19] the guidelines by Braun and Clarke (2006, 87) where the process is divided into six phases; 1) *familiarizing with the data*; 2) *generating initial codes*; 3) *searching for themes*; 4) *reviewing themes*; 5) *defining and naming themes*; and 6) *producing the report*. As the analysis combines thematic analysis and narrative analysis, the phase six is not included as the defined themes are further analyzed though narrative

[19] The step-by-step guide to apply the thematic analysis model by Braun & Clarke (2011, 86) is adapted to fit the characteristics by combining the stage 6 to narrative analysis: instead of producing themes as the final product, the themes are used to produce narratives by using the stage 6 guidelines.

analysis which produces the final products of this study, the narratives about the peacebuilding in Africa by the podcasts. Applications of the phases will be discussed more in detail below.

The first phase, *familiarizing with the data*, involved listening the podcast series several times to obtain a general picture of the interviews, the covered topics and interviewees' backgrounds. This stage was followed by transcribing the interviews, where the verbatim account of all verbal utterances where included in the transcriptions (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88). This process excluded the level of detail present in transitions and other oral forms of expression which are not commonly required in thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88, Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 139–142). Braun and Clarke (2006, 88) argue that the most important factor in transcribing the material for thematic analysis is to maintain the information that is needed from the verbal account and "in a way which is 'true' to its original nature" and that the process of transcribing the material is practically suited to the purpose of analysis (Edwards 1993). As the aim is to identify themes within the different interviews to produce narratives from the podcast as a whole, the level of detail in transcribing the verbatim account of all verbal utterances is sufficient.

In the second phase, *generating initial codes*, involved organizing the data into meaningful groups which are categorized by different techniques (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88). The coding techniques identify features of the data related to the topic under inquiry that appear interesting to the analyst and information that can be examined in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88, Boyatzis 1998, 63). This coding process was supported by the theme identification techniques presented by Ryan and Bernard (2003) to search for repetitions, similarities and differences and theory-related material. The coding process is more 'theory-driven' as contrary to 'data-driven' approach (Braun & Clarke 2006, 88), as the search of meaningful patterns in the data regarding the studied phenomenon is reflecting the theoretical framework established for this study. However, as Ryan and Bernard (2003, 93–94) point out, there needs to be a balance of not searching only what the researcher is looking for and still making justifiable theory-based connections between the data and research questions.

Third phase, *searching for themes*, involves organization of the different codes identified in the previous stage. During this process the codes are analyzed in terms of their relationship to one another and how the codes can be combined to form different levels of themes. The relationship between the codes, between themes and different levels of themes is examined in this phase. In this phase, the

codes are categorized into themes, sub-themes and groups which do not necessarily belong to any of the emerging themes, without abandoning any. (Braun & Clarke 2003, 89–90.)

In the fourth phase, *reviewing themes*, the significance of each theme is evaluated with reflection to the data. In the process sub-themes and themes are combined, separated and new themes formed. In addition, some of the emerging themes might collapse at this stage if there is not enough evidence in the data to support it. This process involves two review processes: in the first phase the initial codes are examined in terms of the formed themes and in the second phase the themes are reflected in relation to the whole data. The patterns formed by the codes need to make sense within the themes and the themes need to be coherent, form an 'accurate representation', of the whole data set. (Braun & Clarke 2003, 90–91.)

The fifth and final phase, *defining and naming themes*, involves "finding the 'essence' of what each theme is about". This includes determining what feature or characteristic of the data the theme captures. This stage is followed by detailed analysis of each theme that identifies both the 'story' of each theme and the overall 'story' of the data in relation to the research question. (Braun & Clarke 2003, 92–93.) This phase in the analysis sets the grounds for the narrative analysis that uses the identified overarching narratives of each theme and the overall narrative of the data to further examine the context and positional grounds for the identified narratives.

4.4.2. Producing the narratives

This stage of the analysis follows the guidelines of producing narratives by Polkinghorne (1995). In this methodological model, the analytical process organizes the data elements into coherent developmental account where the data is synthesized rather than separated into its constituent parts (Polkinghorne 1995, 15–16). Therefore, Polkinghorne (1995) defines the form of analysis as configurative narrative analysis which is adapted in this study. Here the analysis configures the previously identified themes into an explanation to the research question.

The configurative narrative analysis by Polkinghorne (1995) involves seven factors to be included for developing the narrative. I have adapted the guidelines to fit my research setting, while still maintaining the value and meaning of each factor that needs to be included in the analysis: 1) *the cultural context in which the storied case study takes place;* 2) *the characteristics of the participants*

of the podcasts; 3) *the relationships between the participants and with the context*; 4) *interaction of the participants and the context (including aims and goals)*; 5) *the historical perspective and past experiences of the participants*; 6) *the outcome needs to be a* story; 7) *the product needs to be understandable and meaningful story*. Here the context refers both to the institution of African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council where the interviews take place and the peacebuilding context in Africa. The last two factors are more criteria of the outcome rather than factors to be included in the analysis process.

The construction of the narratives follows loosely the above stated construction of narratives by Polkinghorne (1995). However, while the analysis phase of producing the narratives has adopted the phases as a tool to produce the overarching narrative out of the identified themes from the data, the narratives that are produced are not presented in a story like form. On the contrary, they are presented as the compact summary of the thematic dimensions which construct them and named by specific terms to grasp the overarching meaning and content of each narrative. The choice of narrative analysis and the inclusion of thematic analysis to the process includes method specific limitations regardless of the previously discussed advantages. The researcher's positionality and the associated scope and limitations of the chosen methodology and are discussed below.

4.5. Researchers' positionality

The evaluation of positionality of the researcher towards the research topic is a crucial aspect that needs to be included within the analysis process. The notion of positionality is based on the understanding that the research process is determined by the researcher's position within the research field and her relationship towards the research topic. The evaluation of positionality includes assessment of the character of the researcher that possibly and probably affect the choices and evaluation made throughout the research process. These personal characteristics include for example gender, age, ideology, ethnicity, educational background, institutional, political and professional affiliations (Doty 2016, 149). As Polkinghorne (1995) states, assessment of positionality in narrative research forms the grounds for research analysis. Similarly, as with narrative analysis, where the context in which the stories are produced affect the construction of narratives, the context in which the researcher is positioned affects the outcome of the research. In narrative analysis, the researcher is the narrator of the story and ultimately the story is told in her voice (Polkinghorne 1995, 19). The research process can be seen as a story where a certain research topic is chosen instead of others and

where certain theoretical and epistemological choices are adopted to approach the data with particular methodological tools to analyze the data and produce the outcomes. These choices need to be reasoned and discussed to provide justifiable outcomes, but ultimately there exists a gap between theory and practice that creates various possibilities of interpretation (Polkinghorne 1995, 20).

An important factor affecting the positionality of the researcher is connected to whether she is part of the phenomenon of inquiry or the actual research topic (insider) or whether she can be regarded as approaching the topic from outside. However, it is often impossible to draw a clear line between the two and ultimately it can be argued whether it is possible to be completely "outsider" in the interconnected reality that is being studied by researchers. In any case, the positions adopted by the research affect every stage of the research process. (Doty 2016, 149.) It can be argued that my position towards the research topic is mostly being an "outsider" as I did not participate in the data collection, and excluding the email contact with the APN staff to inquire statistics and background information about the podcast, have no contact with the participants and have no connections to the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council or the persons involved. However, my academic background and past experiences create various connections to the research topic and therefore I consider my position locating in between the insider and outsider. Particularly important note to make reflects what Mac Ginty and Firchow (2016, 312–313) have argued about the power relations present in the academia:

> "The essential point is that academia has developed 'approved' ways of categorizing and analyzing conflict. Given the predominance of the global north in the gathering, curating and dissemination of academic knowledge, and the generally elitist nature of academia, academic strictures can be seen as another way of stripping agency from those experiencing conflict on the ground. […] Yet, the implications of how we organize knowledge are profound and are inflected with power."

Therefore, I acknowledge that also my positionality contributes to this power structure with the existing structures guiding the process of designing, conducting and presenting research.

My academic background includes peace and conflict studies in the Finnish context with anthropological perspective to view the issues presented in the field. Often this perspective is materialized in a critical approach to assess normalized assumptions within cultures located in the European and North American contexts which can be argued to dominate the perceptions in social sciences. Furthermore, my personal experiences certainly effect my perceptions over the topic. My first and so far only experience on the African continent is my six-month exchange semester in The

United Republic of Tanzania during spring 2018. This on the ground experience offered me a glimpse of the vast diversity in terms of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural dimensions in present in Tanzania. Therefore, the existing diversity on the continental level is far beyond the scope of my perception. However, the experience certainly affects the perceptions over the peacebuilding efforts on the continent and have shaped the research design I have adopted here. The multiple encounters and discussions on the relationship between the African continent and the rest of the world affect my perceptions over the issues presented in this study about peace and security efforts on the continent and their possible future formations. Critical and postcolonial peacebuilding theories offer tools for critical assessment of the phenomenon combined with narrative analysis that offers constructivist approach to knowledge production. Therefore, the chosen theoretical framework and methodology converge in terms of that they assume knowledge should not be treated without criticism and other alternative interpretations are always present. However, the chosen approach contributes to the demand of critical discussions and evaluation over peacebuilding in Africa and by so doing may produce valuable perspectives to improve they ways of addressing peacebuilding on the continent.

4.6. Scope and limitations

This research focuses on the analysis of one podcast series that addresses the current state and future prospects of issues around peacebuilding in Africa. The *Kujenga Amani* podcast represents a single actor producing particular narrative over the complex and often controversial topic with variety perspectives within the public discussions. The scope of this single case study aims to contribute to this pool of perspectives by producing a scholarly analysis of the narratives in the podcasts during a certain time, place and context. The possibility of producing generalized and objective knowledge is ruled out already by epistemological grounds (Berger & Luckmann 1985). However, since the interviewed persons can be argued to represent significant actors in defining the perceptions over the topic of due to their professional and academic credibility, the constructed narratives may have more power to influence the overall perceptions over the topic. Furthermore, as the podcast itself can be argued to reach a significant number of audiences, the narratives produced by the podcast can be considered to be notable part of the public discussions and constructions of perceptions of the topic.

Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the outcomes of this research are limited by a variety of factors. As stated in the guidelines of constructing the narrative analysis by Polkinghorne (1995), the methodological approach adopted here implies that the research is temporally bounded. The time

period from the time the podcasts were produced locate into certain context in which the data was produced and analyzed. However, as the interviews include reflection over past experiences of the interviewees for a long period of time, the time period of this retrospective reflection can be argued to be relatively extensive. Moreover, the podcast includes five interviews which can be argued to limit the scope of analysis in terms of producing the narrative over the topic from only a few perspectives. However, as the aim of this study is to reflect the narratives produced by the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council, the narrative is ultimately produced by these selected interviews excluding other possibilities of who to interview.

Furthermore, the outcomes produced by the interview are shaped by the questions and how they are formulated for the interviewees. This process includes certain aspects to be part of the discussion while excluding others. Moreover, as I did not have access to the original recordings of the interviews, I had to work with the edited and final versions of the interview that where made into podcasts. This fact relates to the special character of edited media material, which was discussed earlier in the chapter contextualizing the dataset to media studies. This character of the data set is treated as part of the analysis where contextual factors affecting the produced narratives are discussed.

Finally, the choice of methodology sets limits for the scope of the research. As the particular disadvantages of narrative analysis and thematic analysis are discussed earlier, here the limitations regarding general choices to analyze data are discussed. As with any research topic, the decision to address the topic through narrative inquiry already shapes the research design and ways to address the data. As the methodological approach only aims to evaluate the construction of perceptions over particular phenomenon, it excludes examination of the actual quality of the content of these perceptions. In other words, the methodological approach does not assess whether the outcomes of the research are true of false. The analysis can only state whether the outcomes where produced accurately from the data and establishing evidential credibility of its conduct (Polkinghorne 1995, 20).

To conclude this chapter, ethical concerns related to this research are reflected to the sections of the research design discussed above. The traditionally perceived ethical guidelines outlined by Doty (2016) that are relevant in this research have been considered and adopted where necessary throughout the study; since the research data is a public podcast series available online, the role of *informed consent* of the research participants is considered in terms of informing truthfully the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council what the research project is

about. *The right to privacy*, in terms of anonymizing the data and concealing the identities of the participants, is not relevant as the interviews are part of the public podcast and the participants are presented by their own names and identities. The last principle, *protection from harm*, including physical, emotional or any other kind, has been considered in terms of conducting the research according to the principles of integrity, accountability and transparency to conduct ethically responsible research. (Doty 2016, 154–157, Drenth 2006.)

I have recognized characteristics from the anticolonial approach to social sciences by Lincoln and Cannella (2009) to guide the construction of the research agenda. They call for conceptualization of a critical anticolonial approach to research ethics that questions the legitimacy of the will to study others that often dominates the field of social sciences. This includes the imposition of European interpretation and inaccuracies that have constructed the exotic others (Lincoln & Cannella 2009, 278). Instead of analyzing the traditionally imagined subjects within the studied phenomenon, this research examines the perceptions of actors defining the topic; researchers, practitioners and policymakers. In other words, the analysis is focusing on the actors defining the perceptions about peacebuilding in Africa and not the ones that are directly affected by or located within the peacebuilding context in Africa, and therefore avoiding the construction of the 'others'.

5. Results

This chapter discusses the three narratives produced from the thematic analysis. The resulting narratives are *the needy Africa* -narrative, *African first* -narrative and *real peace is local but liberal* -narrative. All three narratives are constructed through the themes that were identified from the analysis[20] of the data. The three narratives and their constructing themes are illustrated in figure 1 below.

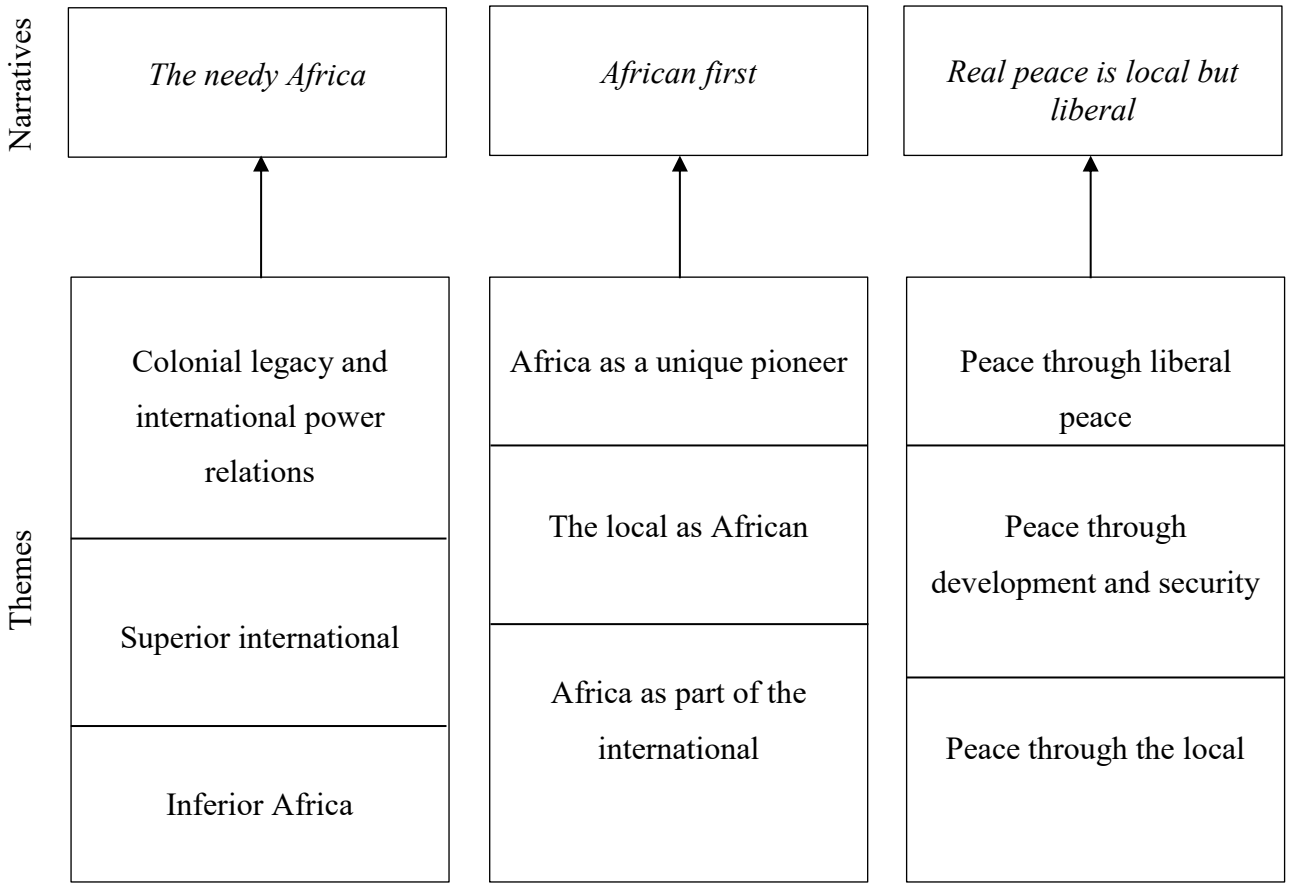

Figure 1: The themes and narratives about peacebuilding in Africa

The first two narratives, *the needy Africa* and *African first,* answer the research question in terms of the first sub-question: how the *African* is narrated through the peacebuilding in Africa in the podcast and the last narrative answers the second sub-question: what kind of *peace* is narrated through peacebuilding in Africa in the podcast. The storyline[21] of each narrative is first presented and

[20] The detailed descriptions of the stages of the adopted thematic analysis are presented in the sections 4.3 and 4.4.
[21] The presentation of the narratives in a story-like form follow loosely the guidelines by Polkinghorne (1995) as presented in the chapter 4.

followed by a detailed discussion of the themes or thematic dimensions that construct the narrative in the following sub-sections. The construction of each narrative includes voices from all of the interviewees, but each theme or thematic dimension is not necessarily present in the discussions by all experts. Only the most elaborating and relevant quotes are presented as part of the analysis to illustrate the deductions that are made. These quotes are considered to summarize the key aspects with similarities and contradictions of the data to the theory and to present multidimensional character of the produced narratives.

In cases where the positionality of the interviewer or the interviewee is considered relevant to the analysis, it is stated as part of the argumentation. As one aim of the study is to investigate "how authoritative knowledge is constructed and meaning is imposed through credible, comprehensive narratives" (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 18), the positionality of the interviewee matters: who is talking and from what position, what kinds of motives and agendas are behind the statement and for what purpose do they serve. The relevant contradictions among the interviewees are also discussed as part of positionality. However, although the silences and what is not being said are a crucial part of the positionality, their inclusion to the analysis is beyond the scope of this research. Moreover, as the analysis is based on a specific case study with selected experts, the generalization of the results is limited. However, as argued in the section justifying the credibility of the data, the interviewee' in the podcast represent people in credible and authoritative positions, which are part of defining the dominant peacebuilding discources. In addition, as the theory driven analysis forms the themes through the reflection of the chosen theoretical framework, other theories might induce different narratives. Moreover, as with qualitative analysis, the stages of the analysis process can vary depending on the decisions made from the broad array of thematic analysis tools. Each quote includes the name of the interviewee and the exact time of the statement during the interview. This adds to the transparency of the data analysis since the data material is accessible at the APN website[22]. Finally, as the research aims to illustrate the complex variety of meanings given to peacebuilding in Africa that derives from the social constructivist ontology (See Berger & Luckmann 1985), the analysis process and the results themselves are part of challenging the seeming consensus of contemporary concepts used in peacebuilding debates as something given, clear and shared (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 19). Therefore, instead of representing generalizable truths, the results of this thesis add to the infinite pool of alternative interpretations of what is peacebuilding in Africa.

[22] Link to the website of the podcast https://apnpodcast.libsyn.com.

5.1. *The needy Africa*

The first narrative forming out of the thematic analysis of the data frames the peacebuilding efforts in Africa through dependency of the outside, referred as the international, UN or Western, actors[23]. The narrative is produced by three thematic dimensions, where the first one refers to the colonial legacy and the formed power relations and partnerships, the second dimension forms around to the idea of superiority of the international, namely the UN system, and the third dimension presenting Africa as inferior through referring to the missing 'African' perspectives or voices in the contemporary peacebuilding activities on the African continent. *The needy Africa* narrative constructs the peacebuilding in Africa through the narrative where the *African* is something that needs assistance due to the colonial history which has created two conditions for the peacebuilding in Africa: 1) international level is perceived as the superior actor deciding the peacebuilding activities on the continent and having the most valued knowledge on peacebuilding in Africa; and 2) *African* is perceived as inferior actor with less legitimacy and power on the peacebuilding context on the continent which is demonstrated by the reference of missing voices of the 'African' in the peacebuilding context of the continent. Therefore, the peacebuilding in Africa is narrated through the perception that the *African* needs to be assisted by the superior international actors with more legitimate knowledge and power about peacebuilding on the continent as the inferior African voices are not enough to create sustainable peace on the continent.

5.1.1. Colonial legacy and international power relations

The first dimension of *the needy Africa* dependency narrative can be analyzed through the postcolonial peacebuilding theory, which argues that peacebuilding narratives often originate from colonial logic of global politics where external actors are legitimate to define the matters of others (Lidén 2011, 57, 69, Jabri 2016, 154–155). This can be seen when the international cooperation dynamics in terms of power are discussed during the interview with Monde Muyangwa. The narrative is constructed both by the interviewer Mwangi Thuita and the interviewee by framing the question about Africa's engagement with other international actors:

> *[H]ow would you see the* […] *Africa's readiness to engage with a wide range of emerging and established powers?* (Mwangi Thuita, 6.30)

[23] This international community often referred in peace and conflict discourse can also be termed as the global peace industry (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017).

The framing of the question itself produces a notion where the capacities or "readiness" of the continent is referred as something that needs to be evaluated by the APN and the international actors. Africa's capabilities to act in the international field is something to be assessed by outsiders, which can be seen to consolidate the asymmetric power of the "global North" over "the global South" (Lidén 2011, 1). Furthermore, the similar argumentation logic is presented by the answer of Monde Muyangwa, as she refers to a political space, which exists and can be filled by outside powers and pointing on the former colonial powers:

> *[T]he former colonial masters, the Brits and the French, well mostly the Brits and the French played a critical role in this space* [Africa's partnerships] *but now we have more actors you know the Chinese, the Turkish is also flexing its muscles on the African continent and you have the Brazils, you have the Russians, you have the Indians, so you have this broader array of partners.* (Monde Muyangwa, 8.31)

The partnerships of the continent are constructed with a neo-colonial overtone (Roberts 2008, 109), which further emphasizes the asymmetric power relations (Lidén 2011) of the African continent to the rest of the world. Muyangwa combines the reference to partnerships with competition over the political space of control on the continent by increasing number of outside forces. The political space is seen as something to be competed over and controlled by outside forces. The dependency narrative with colonial resemblance (see Marten 2004[24]) is strengthened by reference to physical power, as "flexing its muscles", can be understood as military competence to take over control. This reflects the postcolonial critique by Charbonneau (2014), that peacebuilding practices have roots in imperialism, which affects the way peacebuilding is approached and conceptualized in general and in Africa (Lidén 2011, 3).

The necessity of partnerships is further highlighted by Paul D. Williams as he predicts the necessary factors that determine the future of peacebuilding in Africa:

> *I think peacebuilding therefore is gonna be much more about how do we build coalitions and networks across these different types of actors* [state and non-state actors] *whereas previously I think peacebuilding was a bit sort of too focused if you like with what governments and states do.* (Paul D. Williams, 6.21)

[24] Marten (2004) *Enforcing the peace: Learning from the Imperial Past* reflects the implications of imperial era to the approaches and logics of peacebuilding.

The importance of building coalitions and partnerships in peacebuilding in Africa is highlighted by Williams by referring to the international community as "we". Furthermore, Williams emphasizes the need for partnerships for Africa with international actors which is further stressed due to lack of financial resources related to African Union and its partners, in order to develop the peacebuilding efforts on the continent:

> *If you haven't got the money to do that yourself your gonna have to turn to partners, and this is why I think money raises the other big issue for APSA which is that it always had to work in partnership.* […] *some of the partnerships are internal partnerships to Africa* […] *But there's also a whole lot of partnerships from outside the continent, and here particularly the ones with United Nations, the European Union and a few key bilateral relationships I would point to America, France and the UK as probably the most important three in the peace and security area.* (Paul D. Williams, 19.22).

While Williams argues that the full ownership of the peace and security context and its development in Africa by the AU is important, he refers to consistent lack of resources to obtain such ownership. The reasoning rests on the fact that despite the reached political consensus on how to develop the peace and security context of the African continent, the material and financial resources are lacking:

> *To one of the big handicaps I would say the AU has struggled with for the last eighteen years or so now is the despite its making a lot of progress on paper, it's made a lot of progress on building political consensus, but it just not had the money to do these types of things itself*. (Paul D. Williams, 18.36)
>
> *This* [proposal to generate internal financing for the AU's peace and security activities] *to my mind is probably the most important set of decisions and reform initiatives that the AU has had during its entire lifespan because if you can generate your own resources, that proves you're serious, that proves your ownership on these issues and it also enables you to have more control over the types of operations you deploy.* (Paul D. Williams, 20.44)

He stresses the importance of financial resources in order to establish legitimate ownership in terms of power and control over the peace and security context. Williams equates the level of political ownership of peacebuilding in Africa with the level economic power which justifies the dominance of outside actors in peacebuilding efforts on the continent. Interestingly on the other hand, Séverine Autesserre problematizes such perception present at the global level that peacebuilding requires a lot of money and therefore questions the "one who has the money has the power" -justification. However, this statement is part of the reasoning behind the promotion of local level peacebuilding initiatives (See Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, 769) which are not part of the formal, government level activities.

Furthermore, the paradoxical nature of ownership, power and the connected need for Africa to have cooperation in peacebuilding is problematized and the existing imbalance in the partnerships is highlighted by Monde Muyangwa:

> *And then I think many Africans would argue and I would dare to say that they are correct, that most of the partnerships in terms of resources and agenda settings have not been African driven.* […] *those two dimensions have really been driven by outsiders, mostly West, which has made it very challenging in terms of imbalance within the partnerships in themselves, the partnerships are there but there is an imbalance when it comes to resources but also agenda setting that impacts I think you know the overall nature and texture of the partnerships in peacebuilding.* (Monde Muyangwa, 3.36)

Connecting to the arguments made by Williams, Muyangwa points that the existing lack of resources has contributed to the imbalance of power, referred as agenda setting, in the partnerships which further has led to outsiders, referred as the West, to dominate the peacebuilding activities (Lidén 2011, Charbonneau 2014) and not being "African driven". Furthermore, Monde Muyangwa refers to "many Africans" to reassure her argument. While the problematic relationship is acknowledged by all, the partnerships themselves are not questioned as such:

> *But it means once you involve partners, yeah it's good to have there assistance and support but it's not the same as owning it yourself, you lose control and ownership.* (Paul D. Williams, 20.03)

Williams presents the existing power relations and the dependency paradox as part of Africa's peacebuilding narrative: the African ownership and sovereignty to control its continental matters is seen as crucial and desirable, but at the same time the necessity of partnerships and assistance is emphasized which leads to the "Africa's dependency syndrome" referred by Nkwazi N. Mhango (2017). The consistent reference by all interviewees to the importance of partnerships in peacebuilding in Africa together with unequal power dynamics in these partnerships can be connected the colonial legacy of the continent which has created the context from which the contemporary peacebuilding partnerships have evolved. The idea of *the needy Africa* through the dependency syndrome becomes the underlying premise constructing the peacebuilding narrative in Africa.

5.1.2. Superior international

The second dimension building *the needy Africa* -narrative prioritizes the international and the external, more specifically understood as the UN, level in the peacebuilding efforts on the continent.

Séverine Autesserre critically refers to a prevalent mindset present at the international level towards peacebuilding:

> *[T]here is this assumption that is really really prevalent in, on the world scene that outsiders know best. This idea that there is something fundamentally wrong with people in conflict zones otherwise they wouldn't be in that situation they wouldn't have a war. So we need to have foreigners arrive and have them out. And these foreigners have the knowledge that local people lack.* (Séverine Autesserre, 23.59)

Autesserre's criticism towards the general assumption where people in conflict zones are seen as being fundamentally wrong and that there is a need for foreigners' knowledge, produces a construction of an inferior "non-Western" other (Lidén 2011, 60). This connects with the existing dichotomies in liberal peace which consolidate the asymmetric power of the global North and global South (Lidén 2011, 57). The local and the international are constructed as binary opposites (Paffenholz 2015, 858), where the local is perceived either as bad, at the core of the conflict, passive and unable to solve the conflict or as "the savior for international peace operations" Mac Ginty 2015, 840). She presents the answer as a criticism towards the current international peacebuilding efforts, but also notes the necessity of international actors in effective peacebuilding:

> *And so my new book is trying to think about ways that we can actually be a, continue to a, to use what outsiders can bring to conflict zones, the things that foreigners can bring to conflict zones but in a way that supports local peace efforts rather than destroying them.* (Séverine Autesserre, 17.55)

Autesserre's answer reflects the concept of "hybrid peace" (Mac Ginty 2010, Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 430–431) which perceives local peacebuilding as part of the liberal peacebuilding approaches (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 424), not separate of it. However, the answer also reflects the dominant position of the outsiders, the international, in determining the peacebuilding processes, which is strengthened by the referral of her own publication to further validate her argumentation. Furthermore, the superior position of the UN as the international is presented as the prevalent assumption, which reflects the Western domination in peacebuilding, where the West claims superiority over how to build peace (Charbonneau 2014, 611). Despite the stated criticism towards the UN peacekeeping missions, Séverine Autesserre refers to the UN as a positive actor in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

> *The impact* [of international peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo] *has not been as terrible as what the critics currently say but could have been better.* (Séverine Autesserre, 1.22)

> *I have criticized their* [United Nations peacekeepers] *efforts a lot, I've criticized the way they are engaging peacebuilding. I've criticized how they interact with the government, with other populations, I mean we can criticize them on and on for days but the basic fact that remains is that if they were not there, the situation in Congo would be even worse.* (Séverine Autesserre, 2.31)

Therefore, while stating critique towards the international peacebuilding efforts in Africa, she concludes to consolidate their relevance in Congo as being *the basic fact that remains*. Furthermore, Autesserre continues the promotion of the UN peacekeepers while stating the negative role of the Congolese actors and the government (referred through the Congolese army):

> *Currently we hear a lot of people criticizing the United Nations peacekeepers in Congo but also criticizing the diplomats, the non-governmental organizations, the aid organizations, the conditions, like everybody all the foreigners who are in Congo and saying they are just wasting money and I've been one of the people who criticized the international peace efforts. So I do agree that there are a lot of problems with them but at the same time currently the international peacekeepers are the only one I think who are protecting Congolese populations. We can't rely on the Congolese army, they are actually the main perpetrators of human rights violations in Congo right now. We can't rely on the Congolese police or the intelligent services because again, they are really the main perpetrators of human rights abuses. So people who are trying to protect the Congolese populations are the United Nations peacekeepers.* (Séverine Autesserre, 1.34)

United Nations peacekeepers are referred as the international peacekeepers and stated that they are the only one who are protecting the civilian population in the conflict. This argument presents a strong promotion of the UN peacekeeping missions as the superior, the *only* actor protecting the populations in the conflict. *The needy Africa* dependency narrative is built on the premises that, despite the problems, the UN peacekeepers are necessary and vital for the protection of Congolese populations. Similarly, with the thematic dimension promoting the partnerships in peacebuilding, the international system is prioritized over other alternatives through the promotion of UN peacekeeping operations, despite the criticism it has received. According to postcolonial peacebuilding, such perspective reflects the broader power relations of global politics, where the international community, namely the Western countries, who dominate the conceptualization of peace and development (Lidén 2011, 57).

5.1.3. Inferior Africa

The third dimension constructing *the needy Africa* narrative refers to the distinctive character of the Africa and 'African' compared to others and thus leading to the separation of Africa from the international. This dimension is connected to the first and second dimensions of prioritizing the international and UN level peacebuilding efforts over other alternatives, as the position of Africa is referred as inferior compared to others:

> *African academics and practitioners have difficult time sometimes engaging with their own politicians and their own policy makers because their knowledge is not valued. So we need to create that paradigm shift where that knowledge is valued as much as if not more than the knowledge that comes from outside.* (Monde Muyangwa, 19.47)

The power structures are present in the framing of the answer, as the aim is to reach equal appreciation and valuing of the 'African' knowledge. The dynamics of these power relations are not present just at the international-African -axis, but also between the Africans. The dependency narrative is constructed through the statement of valuing the 'African' knowledge as much as *if not more*, which highlights the aim of equality, but not necessarily superiority, over the power to decide over own matters. 'African' perspectives should be *added* to, not *replace* the existing peacebuilding approaches:

> *If we are to deepen peacebuilding and we are to make it sustainable, you have to listen to African knowledge you have to incorporate African knowledge and African approaches for it to be sustainable.* (Monde Muyangwa, 5.45)

Furthermore, while Muyangwa emphasizes the need to increase the "African" perspectives in peacebuilding approaches, the narrative is constructed by making a separation of the international and 'African' peacebuilding approaches. This is illustrated when Muyangwa explains the US-African relations in the field of peacebuilding:

> *And we have seen overall as you look back over the years is that in many cases, African voices and African knowledge is missing. From our approach to peace and peacebuilding.* (Monde Muyangwa, 5.10)

This construction makes the distinction visible as "our approach" is seen as something different from the 'African' approach. Muyangwa's stated "our approach" may refer to the US peacebuilding policy that plays a key role in defining the international UN peacebuilding policies. In this case, the 'African'

is produced as a "non-Western other", an assumption that is argued to be embedded in the liberal peacebuilding discourse (Lidén 2011, 69). This logic of thinking contributes to the argument that peacebuilding practices have roots in imperialism where the alternative, critical approaches, as presented by Muyangwa, origin from the old forms of intervention and power relations (Charbonneau 2014). Moreover, Muyangwa previously referred to the need for a paradigm shift to value African knowledge more, but stating that the performers of such paradigm shift is presented as "we" which connects to the similar processes of othering that were identified in Autesserre's arguments about the Congolese army's human rights perpetrations, the creation of the inferior "non-Western" other (Lidén 2011, 60), with asymmetric power relations (Lidén 2011, 57) and local-international binaries (Paffenholz 2015, 858).

All these dimensions producing *the needy Africa* narrative can be seen through the processes referred as *othering* by De Buitrago (2012), where social processes and categorizations affected by power relations and perceptions over the superior and inferior create "us" and "them" divisions. Wilson (2012) argues, that such processes of othering are present in international relations. The overall assumption or the norm seems to be, that Africa needs to be assisted and the main question remains how, not who is involved. The presented partnerships are referred as between Africa and others, neglecting the regional and African state level dynamics. The discussion around peacebuilding in Africa evolves around the need for partnerships which should aim at equality or balanced power, ignoring the possibilities of full ownership which are often assumed the norm in the West. The problems present in the partnerships and loss of ownership are acknowledged, but not questioned as such. The colonial heritage is reflected in the ways to address the peacebuilding in Africa and the presented assumptions over the need of Africa to be assisted are present:

> *And then foreigners who arrive on the ground. And when they interact with local populations, we are talking about Congolese populations, Sudanese populations, you know populations everywhere they already have in mind what the problem is, what the solution is, and so they involve the intended beneficiaries, the African people, only at the stage of the implementation of the program. But they don't involve local intended beneficiaries at the stage of, well help we figure out what your problem is and help me figure out what kind of solutions we should bring.* (Séverine Autesserre, 7.25)

The criticism over the international peace-efforts is constructing *the needy Africa* -narrative, as the intended beneficiaries, equated by Africans, are taken as granted and the question is *whether* they need assistance and cooperation in peacebuilding, but *how* they need it:

> *[A]nd by the way do you need an outside, do you need foreigners come to help, people are do not need us and if you need us to help you, what do you need, do you need me be there in person, do you need money, do you need logistic help, do you need political like what do you need. And that's not at all the peacebuilding currently works.* (Séverine Autesserre, 8.00)

Interestingly, Autesserre simultaneously problematizes the general assumption over the existence of the needs of the intended beneficiaries by asking *do you need foreigners come to help*. However, the main argumentation still reflects the liberal peace paradigm of assuming legitimate role of external actors in peacebuilding (Lidén 2011, 69). What becomes interesting however, both theoretically and analytically, is the construction of the 'African' in the discussions between the interviewer and the guest speakers. The deconstruction of the meanings and interpretations of the concept of "African in the podcast is analyzed in the following section where the second narrative, *African first*, is produced.

5.2. *African first*

The second narrative about peacebuilding in Africa promotes 'African' ownership, knowledge and expertise by emphasizing the assumed unique character of the 'African' as a specific concept (Mazrui 1967, 35, Karbo 2018, 8, Kewir & Ngah 2018, 22). The narrative *African first*[25] highlights the importance of 'African' perspectives, which is strengthened also in the description of the aims of the APN and the *Kujenga Amani* podcast, as the core value of "African peacebuilding"[26]. The narrative is produced through three thematic dimensions where the first presents Africa as a pioneer in the international arena in terms of advancing peace and security agenda with its unique character. The second dimension emphasizes the importance of the local in peacebuilding processes through equating the concepts 'African' and the local. The promotion of the 'African' through the concept of local is connected to the local turn(s), which has gained increasing popularity among peacebuilding theories (See Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, Mac Ginty 2010, Paffenholz 2015, Lidén 2011) and becoming the "buzzword" of contemporary peacebuilding debates (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 429). The third dimension refers to Africa as an equal actor in the international field, which emphasizes refers to Africa as part of the international, not separate from it.

[25] African first refers to the slogan "America first", a nationalistic security policy of the US Trump administration (Ettinger 2018, Magcamit 2017). However, the narrative African first only refers to the America first policy concept by its nature of protecting and promoting Africa's leading role in peace and security issues on the continent and focusing primarily on securing the interest of Africa.

[26] According to the Social Science Research Council, "The APN promotes the visibility of African peacebuilding knowledge" and aims "to advance African debates on peacebuilding and promote African perspectives". The podcast description refers to "African peacebuilding" (SSRC 2019b, SSRC 2019b).

5.2.1. Africa as a unique pioneer

The first dimension producing *the African first* -narrative, presents the role of the AU as a pioneer in developing the peace and security agenda in the UN context:

> *In fact, I think it's fair to say that the African Union was ahead of United Nations in recognizing the value of sustaining peace as a core principle in engaging countries in building peace and security around the continent. And so the UN has been playing a little bit of catch up there. But now I think they are on equal footing.* (Macharia Kamau, 4.32)

Kamau refers to African Union being the pioneering actor within the international field to understand the value of *sustainable* peace in peace and security development on the continent. Furthermore, Kamau states that the UN has been slower in this process to understand the value of such development compared to the AU. Such argument reflects the notion that the evolution of the institutional framework of the continent in peace and security issues has been influenced by the promotion of African ownership and leading role in addressing the peace and security challenges on the continent (Karbo & Virk 2018). The role of the AU is placed above the UN in Kamau's answer. This reciprocates the existing power relations between the superior international level, namely the Western countries and the UN, and the AU (Lidén 2011) to set AU as the superior actor in peacebuilding development work. The theoretical conceptualization of *Pax Africana* (Mazrui 1967) is reflected by Kamau as the role of Pan-African perspective and African ownership is highlighted in peacebuilding in Africa (Kewir & Ngah 2018, 22, see Karbo & Virk 2018).

Similarly, the comparison between the AU and the UN continues by Paul D. Williams with referring to the unique and different response of the AU to peace and security challenges than compared to the UN:

> *[T]he African answer to those questions* [how to respond to peace and security challenges] *has been quite different in some ways than in other parts of the world.* […] *[T]he African Union has quite different take on what peace operations should be about compared to the United Nations which talks about peacekeeping missions.* (Paul D. Williams 17.56)

This thematic dimension of emphasizing the pioneering and unique characteristics of the AU in terms of peacebuilding agenda on the continent present the 'African' as something superior compared to

the UN level and more broadly the "international" (Lidén 2011). At the same time, this dimension separates the AU and the 'African' from the international, as distinct unity with unique approaches to peacebuilding (See Karbo 2018,8, Kewir & Ngah 2018, 22). The logic of separation between the AU and UN reflects the binary dichotomy between the local and the international (Pazzenholz 2015, 858), but in this case the local becomes the AU and its pioneering work in the field of peacebuilding, also in the UN context. The following section further analyzes the thematic dimension of African becoming local.

5.2.2. The local as African

The emphasis of the local in contemporary peacebuilding discourses has gained increasing attention (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017). Hirblinger & Simons (2015, 424) argue, that the local in peacebuilding discourses is often referred as resistance against the liberal peacebuilding paradigm or as part of multidimensional peacebuilding approach combining the local to the liberal peace. The second dimension building *the African first* -narrative emphasizes the importance of the 'local' in peacebuilding and simultaneously equating the 'local' as 'African':

> *I think that if peace is to be sustainable, it has to be locally owned. It cannot be driven from the outside. And we have seen overall as you look back over the years in many cases, African voices and African knowledge is missing.* (Monde Muyangwa, 5.00)

> *I see far too many African officials, government officials who continue to privilege outside expertise rather than African knowledge and expertise. That would rather hire a consultant from outside and paying them a lots of money when you have African academics and others who are doing this work on the ground.* (Monde Muyangwa, 19.20)

Muyangwa highlights the necessity of paradigm shift towards the appreciation of locally owned peace, which is achieved through 'African' knowledge. However, the meaning and content of 'African' is not defined and can be criticized by the oversimplification of referring the African continent as being unified entity (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005) with the misconception of specific geographical, cultural or political characteristics that would be shared across the continent. This connects to the processes of constructing the "non-Western" other in liberal peacebuilding (Lidén 2011, 69), where the other is categorized with oversimplification neglecting the socio-cultural variety (Nothias 2018). Nevertheless, this dimension of connecting the concept of local and 'African' constructs *the African first* -narrative, as it frames the combination of local and African a priority and

necessity in order to achieve peace on the continent and therefore it is crucial component of the peacebuilding narrative in Africa (Karbo 2018, 8, Kewir & Ngah 2018).

Interestingly, Séverine Autesserre is the only one problematizing the framing of Africa as a homogenous entity which is also part of the presentation by APN. As an answer to the interviewer's question to rate the overall impact of international peacebuilding in Africa, she replies:

> *I don't want to talk about Africa in general, I think it's much more productive to talk about specific countries*. (Séverine Autesserre, 1.12)

Furthermore, in her answer she continues to refer to Congolese populations and Congo as a state instead of framing the answer around 'African' aspects related to peacebuilding efforts on the area. By breaking the pattern of oversimplification about the African continent produced by the interviewer she points out a critical perspective present in the current peacebuilding debates (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005). What is notable however, is that also the state-level scrutiny can fail to distinguish the variety of different localities present within its territory. However, similarly with Muyangwa, she continues prioritizing the local knowledge, referred as Congolese people, when she explains in detail her experiences on how local peacebuilding works:

> *So let's say Ninja, South Kivu. They went to Ninja and they tried to figure out why people where fighting. And they figured that out not by sending and expert like you or I or you know one of their big shot in Sweden. They actually hired Congolese researchers, Congolese Union leaders from the area"* […] *So they put in place local peace committees that where staffed by volunteers from the area. I could go on and on but you see the kind of initiative that you have that is so different from the massive conferences in Geneva or in New York or in Nairobi that we see all the time with international peacebuilding efforts.* (Séverine Autesserre, 9.29)

Furthermore, she makes a clear distinction of "us" and "them" by prioritizing the Congolese people on the ground as the local actors, "them", as more effective peacebuilders over "us", meaning herself, the interviewer as part of the APN organization and international peace actors such as Swedish "big shots". Similarly, Lena Slachmuijlder adopts similar process of othering and refers to "us" and "them" (De Buitrago 2012), and simultaneously promotes the value of "them", as the local actors in peacebuilding:

> *And our project and collaboration with them has been able to harness their intellectual efforts and their you know their great minds to help us better advocate for durable solutions.* (Lena Slachmuijlder, 16.35)

Slachmuijlder refers to harnessing *their* intellectual efforts and great minds to help *us*, which makes a distinction on the local and the international. Hirblinger and Simons (2015, 422–432) argue, that the notion of the local is remade in global encounters that reflects both international development discourse and colonial practices. While this idea of "non-Western other" (Lidén 2011, 69). is constructed through positive framing, it still relies on colonial logic present in the liberal peacebuilding thought (Lidén 2011, 57). Bräuchler and Naucke (2017, 432) argue, that the local turn often operates through,

> "a selective glorification, adoption and decontextualization of specific elements and traditions, which can turn 'the local' intro a stereotypically idealized and homogenized construction being, e.g. egalitarian, inclusive, consensual and harmonious. […] Local inequalities, power struggles, mechanisms of exclusion and suppression don't fit into that picture."

Furthermore, the argumentation reflects the second alternative in current local peacebuilding discourse where the local is perceived as "the savior for international peace operations" instead of seeing it as bad, at the core of the conflict, passive and unable to solve the conflict (Mac Ginty 2015, 840). This harmonious and idealized local alternative in the binary dichotomy between the local and the international (Pazzenholz 2015, 858) assumes that the local is a homogenous entity with shared aspirations and goals towards "durable solutions" in peacebuilding. Such assumption has been criticized by uncovering the heterogeneity of the 'local' which entails a variety of interests and actors who are not always able or willing to participate or share common motives (Krummenacher 2014, vi). Ultimately, the 'local' can be used as a tool to justify and make claims about what good peacebuilding is (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 423).

Moreover, the following discussions about local peacebuilding reflect the argument made by Carvalho et al. (2014, 6) in the report by The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, which refers to 'local ownership' "as a process of consulting and involving locals in implementing externally designed models where the problems have already been diagnosed by external experts and solutions found through experiences from elsewhere":

> *[A]s I do the trainings and as I try equip people with the tools I say we are almost like social doctors. Like a doctor will come in, look at the patient and be able to take his temperature, be able to look at what might be going on with his breathing and be able to understand okay I think this is what the patient needs.* […] *we are able to detect what*

> *the challenges are and then we design our initiatives to be able to do that.* (Lena Slachmuijlder, 5.57)

Therefore, this second thematic dimension of promoting the local and equating it with African and Congolese people as part of the African entity constructs the *African firs*t -narrative. This dimension promotes the African as a priority in peacebuilding efforts on the continent through equating the concept with the 'local', the contemporary buzzword in peacebuilding today (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 429). However, as an ambiguous and undefined concept, the detailed meaning of 'local' and therefore 'African' remain elusive and even contradictory in the podcast.

5.2.3. Africa as part of the international

The third dimension refers to Africa as part of the international, not separate from it, where the peacebuilding in Africa is seen as part of the international and therefore should be a concern of the international as well as the Africa:

> *I think the African Union, and the APSA, has been a really important development, not just for Africa but also for the world, I think one thing that's often forgotten is that it's good for the world, not just for the Africa, to have good institutions in Africa that can deal with its peace and security challenges so it's sort of a win-win-win.* (Paul D. Williams, 11.43)

Williams highlights the importance of acknowledging the peace and security challenges as a global problem not restricting to only to the geographical boundaries of the African continent which can, if approached and solved together, be beneficial for all actors. (See Ero 2013). Furthermore, Williams continues the construction of Africa's equal stand in the global sphere by referring to a power-political story of Africa:

> *So we have a sort of power-political story which I think is primarily about Africa trying to achieve more assertiveness in the international round trying to become more autonomous and have more control over its own decisions and what happens on the continent and so in that sense part of the impetus for the APSA is about you know an assertive pushback from sort of a neocolonial influence.* (Paul D. Williams, 12.30)

This reference to neocolonial influence and the aim of Africa becoming autonomous and sovereign over issues of the continent are part of the thematic dimension which refers to Africa as equal actor

in the international context. This dimension diminishes the distinct characters previously associated with the African continent as something separate and unique compared to the international.

Furthermore, this distinction of Africa and the international is further diminished by Monde Muyangwa by equating the problem of corruption associated with Africa as being also a problem globally:

> *[C]ertain countries are struggling with the issue of corruption. Corruption is not an African problem alone, it's a global problem. But Africa is the continent in my view that can least afford it.* (Monde Muyangwa, 15.05)

Moreover, also Macharia Kamau continues this argumentation by the reference of equating the Kenyan post-election challenges and violence with general challenges related to establishing and upholding democracy in the world, and more specifically in the US. The interviewer asks Kamau:

> *They seemed to paint the picture of a country* [Kenya during elections in 2017] *in disarray, pulling apart at the seams and the government that was not respecting the rule of law. What made you feel that need to response to those claims in the way that you did?* (Mwangi Thuita, 9.25)

To which Kamau replies:

> *Because, the claims were false. And they were damaging to the image of the country. And in fact they were irresponsible when you consider the people who wrote them. You would have expected people of their status, people of their experience to have written something much more responsible that was going to actually move the issues of international relations forward.* […] *And yet we all know that the reality in Kenya is fundamentally different. We have thriving democracy, we, the human rights are being protected. People lose lives, people loose lives here in America.* (Macharia Kamau, 9.40)

Kamau presents the challenges faced by Kenya during the 2017 elections as no different compared to similar challenges faced by other countries in the world. This dimension connects to the broader discussion of negative representation of Africa (Falola & Haar 2010), where for example the representation of conflicts in Africa are presented through the perspective of primitive tribes, with savage and barbaric characteristics together with images of suffering, starvation and bloodshed (Matthews and Ali 2004) which overrides the positive accomplishments and success stories:

> *We need to be, in fact, very responsive and very vigilant that we don't allow irresponsible criticism of what are in fact attempts to embed democracy to undermine*

> *the democratic experience in the world, which by the way isn't that old, actually quite young.* (Macharia Kamau, 11.50)

Interestingly, Kamau also presents a critical comment over the core value in liberal peace, the norm of democracy and its self-evident role as one of the goals in peacebuilding but stating its "young" age in human history. The answer presents the need for critical assessment of presenting information about Africa and critical perspective overall towards the norms and values which guide our perceptions over peacebuilding on the continent (See Falola & Haar 2010).

All three thematic dimensions produce a narrative about peacebuilding in Africa that promotes the 'African', in terms of knowledge, voices and expertise, as the key of more effective peacebuilding and the role of the African institutions and their 'local' nature. At the same time, the narrative frames African institutions and perspectives as pioneers in peace and security issues in the local grassroots level but also in the international institutions. The narrative is a positive framing of the 'African' and is constructed around strong division of 'us' and 'them', where 'them' is referred as the African, local and indigenous and "us" everything beyond that division, seen as the outsiders, through the colonial discourse. Such logic of understanding positions in international relations are argued to be Eurocentric and construct superior and inferior binaries (See Wilson 2012). *The needy Africa* -narrative and *the African first* -narrative are intertwined through the logic of how they are produced: both origin from the colonial legacy with unbalanced international relations and rely on processes of othering but serve for different motives: *the needy Africa* -narrative highlights the dependency syndrome (see Mhango 2017) and the superior position of the international UN system to dominate the peacebuilding discourse and practice whereas *the African first* -narrative promotes the contemporary 'local'-'African' duality achieving increasing popularity and acceptance in peacebuilding debates today (See Bräuchler & Naucke 2017). These two narratives answer ultimately the first sub-question of the research: how the *African* is narrated through the podcast. The last narrative answers the second sub-question on what kind of *peace* is narrated thought the podcast and analyzed below.

5.3. *Real peace is local but liberal*

The third narrative *real peace is local but liberal* is produced through three thematic dimensions which define the content and values of peacebuilding and peace which are pursued through peacebuilding in Africa. The first theme defines peacebuilding in Africa through the principles and

values of liberal peace theory (See Richmond 2008, 2011, Roberts 2011, Iįguez de Heredia 2017). The second dimension, which is strongly connected to the first one with the reference to liberal peace, defines peacebuilding and peace in broader terms through reference to development and security as dimensions of peace (See Jenkins 2013, Roberts 2011, Chandler 2007, Stern & Öjendal 2012). The third theme refers to the local turn(s), a theoretical branch with emphasis of the local, as an approach to improve peacebuilding efforts in Africa and achieve sustainable and long-lasting peace (See Lidén 2011, Charbonneau 2014, Paffenholz 2015, Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013, Bräuchler & Naucke 2017). All three thematic dimensions construct the narrative of peacebuilding in Africa that is primarily referred with strong emphasis on the local involvement, ownership and context specific approaches which are achieved by engaging with the values derived from liberal peace. Furthermore, this narrative perceives peace, the goal of peacebuilding in Africa, as connected to the development and security aspects of the continent.

5.3.1. Peacebuilding through liberal peace

The first theme which constructs the conceptualization of peacebuilding in Africa reflects the liberal peace theory as part of the "third generation of peacebuilding" (Richmond 2008). This dimension perceives the concepts of governance, human rights, rule of law and democracy as core values of building peace in Africa (Richmond 2008, 106). All interviewees connect the values of liberal peace either directly or indirectly to successful and *sustainable* peacebuilding efforts. According to Lidén (2011) such logic reflects the idea of sustainable peace being dependent upon a transitional cure of liberal peacebuilding to get "back on track" with progress and development. This logic is emphasized by Paul D. Williams, as he states that good governance is at the core of peacebuilding:

> *[P]eacebuilding to me, in many of those situations is really just about how we get good governance, and this is not just my idea obviously, this is vowing into the key documents at the heart of the APSA in looking at the connection between good governance and peacebuilding outcomes.* (Paul D. Williams, 7.23)

Williams refers to good governance as one of the most important outcomes of successful peacebuilding and states that there exists a link between the two. Importantly, the concept of *good governance* is defined through the ideals of liberal peace, including certain specific governance model (Iįguez de Heredia 2017, Roberts 2011, 1). As the opposite of promoted concept of *good* governance, which is connected to democracy, Williams argues against autocratic governance models:

> *I think really at the heart of peacebuilding is how we think about governing and our institutions of governance. And so I think in Africa a number of governments have faced, all governments are faced with a choice. Are they gonna try empower and facilitate growth and prosperity of their populations or are they gonna try clamp down on those. And I think the more authoritarian and more autocratic states I think it's their own choices about governance that are increasingly are our major security problems.* (Paul D. Williams, 6.45)

Autocratic governance models are seen as major security problems, as whereas the factors such as empowerment, economic growth and prosperity are linked with the concept of good governance (Jenkins 2013, 25–26). The ideals of good governance stated by Williams are strongly connected to the democratic mode of governance which is the superior and prioritized mode of state control over its population in liberal peace. Peacebuilding connects to transforming national structures into democratic institutions. (Sriram, Martin-Ortega & Herman 2010, Roberts 2011, 8–9.) Williams connects also the developmental aspects, growth and prosperity, to the ideals of peacebuilding (Jenkins 2013, 19–29), which is the second thematic dimension constructing the narrative, and closely linked with the liberal peace theory.

Similarly, Macharia Kamau, as a former UN representative in various positions[27], promotes the values of liberal peace by promoting the building of governance institutions, which is the Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

> *Goal 16 on building the governance institutions on, and ensuring that we enable governments to be much more directive to focus on building institutions in countries, to focus on the rule of law as core part of the delivery of the involvement of people and securing people's rights within the context of their nations and their societies.* (Macharia Kamau, 7.14)

Kamau connects the challenges of sustaining peace to the challenges faced with governance and at the same time, connects the other values of liberal peace, the rule of law and human rights, to successful institution building that enables peace. However, interestingly, Kamau refers to *people's* rights, instead of human rights, when referring to the tools to achieve peace. This can be understood through the strong promotion of the "African" in Kamau's answers, as analyzed in the narrative 2,

[27] Macharia Kamau's UN positions include serving as an ambassador and permanent representative of Kenya to the United Nations since 2010, co-chairing of open working group on sustainable development goals, co-facilitator of intergovernmental negotiations on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and various positions in different UN agencies, including UNDP, UNICEF and UN advisory groups. In 2016 he was appointed chairman to UN Peacebuilding Commission.

since the African human rights system and its main documents[28] highlight the role of the community as forming part of the human rights documents of the continent.

Interestingly, Séverine Autesserre, while referring to the principles of liberal peace as necessary part of the peacebuilding processes in Africa, also presents critique towards the values and principles present in the liberal peace theory. While presenting this critique, she still refers to such values as fundamentally good and rather criticizes the assumptions present in the implementation phases of peacebuilding:

> *And so I talk about three big assumptions* [present in the contemporary peacebuilding efforts], *the first one is that all good things go together. The idea that we are gonna promote peace, democracy, human rights, good governance, state building because it's a whole package and every single component of this package reinforces the others. So for instance that the assumption that democracy brings, democracy leads to peace and peace leads to democracy.* […] *and we have to be completely aware that sometime working toward one of the goals like democracy is gonna mean that we are going backward with some of the other goals, peace.* (Séverine Autesserre, 19.13)

In other words, she refers to democracy, human rights, good governance and state building as all something that should be promoted, as *good things*, and aimed at, but highlighting the acknowledgement that such concepts do not necessarily reinforce others. Similar critique was presented in Macharia Kamau's answer when he pointed caution towards the young age of democracy, but simultaneously acknowledging its assumed value. The emphasis on the values of democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law as core part of peacebuilding efforts in Africa construct the narrative, where liberal peace is seen as the roadmap to peace on the continent. This reflects the liberal peace consensus (Richmond 2011, 44), where the values of liberal peace, *all good things*, are perceived to promote universal peace (Roberts 2011, 1, See Dingwerth & Pattberg 2006, Kaldor 2007).

5.3.2. Peace through development and security

The second theme, also connected to the values of liberal peacebuilding (Richmond 2008, 105–106), constructs the peacebuilding narrative through development and security references (Stern & Öjendal

[28] The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, also known as the Banjul Charter, highlights the role of the community as forming part of the commonly individually perceived rights, which is the dominating Western perception of human rights, present in the UN and European human rights approaches.

2012, Roberts 2011, 3–4). The development-security nexus is a widely referred concept in the international policy contexts to address and legitimize various activities (Chandler 2007, 368) but the meaning of the term has been problematized. Stern & Öjendal (2012, 14) argue, that there exists a growing consensus on the assumption that security and development are interconnected. However, at the same time the notions of security and development refer to different empirical realities and evoke contestation over meaning (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 15). The inclusion of development, in terms of social and economic, to peacebuilding emphasizes the preventative aspects of the perception of peace (Jenkins 2013, 19–20). Lena Slachmuijlder explains the aims of local peacebuilding efforts in which her organization is engaged with:

> *[W]e all want this to be a safe and economically prosperous community, how can we work together towards that*. (Lena Slachmuijlder, 8.57)

Safety and economic prosperity are perceived as the self-evident goals of peacebuilding that everyone wants. The assumed interconnection between safety and economic development is present in all interviews, which reflects the dominant security-nexus discourse in peacebuilding[29]. Similarly, Monde Muyangwa refers to Africa's peacebuilding partnerships focusing on the *development and trade space* (9.15). Furthermore, Paul D. Williams analyzes the main obstacles faced by governments across the globe in terms of peace:

> *I think governments all over the world are struggling at the moment to deliver both security and prosperity to their populations.* (Paul D. Williams, 5.22)

Williams deepens the assumed connection of the development-security nexus (Stern & Öjendal 2012) to peace by referring to security and prosperity as being part of the duties of the government to be delivered to its people. This connection elaborated the self-evidently assumed preference of specific type of governance. Furthermore, Slachmuijlder states a link between the development, as human progress, and violent conflict:

> *We see violent conflict as the number one obstacle to human progress across the world today.* […] *the countries that are unable to deal with violent conflict are not able to progress on all of the main human development indicators.* (Lena Slachmuijlder, 3.49)

[29] In 2004, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan stated in his Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that development and security are inextricably linked (UN 2004).

Moreover, by predicting the future of peacebuilding, Williams contributes to the peace and development connection by stating the environmental aspects related to peacebuilding efforts:

> *So I think peacebuilding in the future is gonna have to be a lot more about wrestling with the dynamics between humans and the biosphere and human health and animal health and biodiversity and these types of things.* (Paul D. Williams, 8.34)

Security and development become mutually reinforcing idioms that are connected with biopolitics, that is the governance and regulation of spheres of life (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 28), as the role of biosphere in peacebuilding is emphasized. Macharia Kamau further reflects the connection of the biopolitics to the security-development nexus by stating that development is the necessity of peace and without development, peace is not possible because they are both connected to providing the basic necessities for life:

> *So there really is no peace without development because development is what puts food on the table, is what clothes people, is what gives people good health, it's even what gives people hope. And so you got to have development in order to allow people to feel calm enough, embedded enough in the process of the evolution of the country, to be themselves part of the peace process. But you need peace for development to happen also.* (Macharia Kamau, 8.23)

He also states that the relationship between peace and development as reciprocal since peace is also necessary for development to occur. The logic of combining the development-security nexus to peacebuilding reflects the UN Sustainable Development Goals with direct references of development, poverty reduction and providing peace and security with mutually reinforcing dynamics (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 26). Such argument on the reciprocal relationship between peace and development reflects also the core logic of reciprocal values of liberal peacebuilding (Richmond 2008, 105–106).

Furthermore, the interviewees all acknowledge the existing critique towards the international peacebuilding efforts in terms of their emphasis on security-centered responses (Roberts 2011), which are connected to the militarization dynamics. The interviewer asks how to produce peacebuilding programs and change the perspective in the contemporary peace and security environment,

> *[E]specially in a world in which there is increasing emphasis in militarized and security-focused responses to conflict.* (Mwangi Thuita, interview with Lena Slachmuijlder, 19.34)

> *And in particularly in governance, we gotta think more seriously about demilitarization. I think an awful lot of Africa's problems stem from the fact that too many of its*

> *institutions are militarized, too many of its economies are militarized and build around you know using the means of preparing means of violence.* (Paul D. Williams, 7.43)

The security aspect of peacebuilding is connected to militarized control by the state over its population to sustain peace. The emphasis on the governance, and specifically the need to strengthen the institutions of governance, is argued to be at the core of liberal peacebuilding agenda (Knight 2005, 359). The interviewees' as well as the interviewer all criticize such dominating approach in the international peacebuilding context, which roots from the first and second generation of peacebuilding (Roberts 2011).

Furthermore, Kamau states a change in the attitude at global level, that includes a broader array of tools to address the peacebuilding efforts and Williams reflects the broadening perspective of APSA's institutions to include expanding variety of security issues to its peacebuilding approaches:

> *So I have witnessed a real significant change of attitude so we are not just focused on securitization responses, militarization responses to the challenges of peace and security, but we also focusing on the imperative of working with youth, working with women, working with communities, building and sustaining peace in countries as a core way of delivering peace and security in our world.* (Macharia Kamau, 3.20)

> *[T]he APSA institutions sort of broadened its focus out from just armed conflict and peacekeeping. How is it trying to address broader security challenges so things like transnational issues like environmental change and let's say negative impacts of climate change, HIV/AIDS if we are thinking, or Ebola if we are thinking of diseases. Maritime security issues, piracy, some of those things and then counter terrorism obviously.* (Paul D. Williams, 3.40)

The response reflects a more humanized security-development nexus, where idea of desirable state of living includes a broader array of factors: humans, women, cultures and/or the natural environment (Stren & Öjendal 2012, 26). This way of referring to include various actors, youth, women and communities to peacebuilding activities also connects the third thematic dimension that reflects the local turn(s) in peacebuilding theory, which will be discussed in the section 5.3.3. Kamau states that there exists change of perspective in terms of the traditional security-focused peacebuilding approaches (Richmond 2008).

Interestingly however, Monde Muyangwa contradicts these arguments by emphasizing the security-centered responses and the evolution of peacebuilding approaches in Africa:

> *What you do see though is all of these partners have very keen interests in security in Africa. We have seen more countries open up basis, military basis on the African continent. We have seen more partners in engage in the conflict management side and security management side in Africa. All of that inevitably will affect peace and peacebuilding in Africa. You just cannot tell how right now at this point. But it will have implications for the continent.* (Monde Muyangwa, 9.55)

> *But that framework* [APSA] *still heavily privileges conflict management.* (Monde Muyangwa, 22.37)

What differs Muyangwa's statement from Williams' and Kamau's statement is the reference to external actors' emphasis; peacebuilding partners in Africa highlight the security and militarization dimension of peacebuilding while Africa itself is argued to engage into broader array of non-militarized peacebuilding tools:

> *In many ways the peacebuilding frameworks that we have, have privileged the conflict management aspect of it. And not so much the peacebuilding dimension of it. Because you have to look at peacebuilding as a continuum right, and unfortunately I think globally and even on the continent itself, the focus has been so much on conflict management.* (Monde Muyangwa, 2.98)

The contradicting arguments about the meaning and usages of various dimensions of the security illustrate the contemporary ambiguity of the concept. Various scholars have problematized the notion of security as a state of being which could be attained (Stern & Öjendal 2012, 24). What is notable however, is the connection of the security-development discourse to colonial era and postcolonial state-building Stern & Öjendal 2012, 19). Muyangwa refers to the increasing interest of Africa's partners in the security related areas on the continent, which reflects the postcolonial logic in Africa's partnerships that is framed around security and development (see Stern & Öjendal 2012). Interestingly, the interviewees perceive the institutional and ideological development of the AU from different perspectives which result in contradicting arguments about the peacebuilding frameworks. Part of the second thematic dimension addressing the peacebuilding through development-security nexus broadens the conceptualization of contemporary peacebuilding efforts through a wider perspective which includes developmental and human factors (Stern & Öjendal 2012) and as a dynamic and never-ending process (Jenkins 2013, 23–24). Moreover, Williams refers to peacekeeping and therefore making a distinction between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, which are often perceived as overlapping concepts (Veney 2013). In other words, peacekeeping is seen as part of the activities of the broader concept of peacebuilding, forming the security aspect of it. This perception by Williams constructs peace as something more than simply absence of violence, as the

state's responsibility is to provide growth and prosperity to its populations. Such conditions require broader array of duties, such as health services and environmental protection.

5.3.3. Peace through the local

The third and final dimension constructing the *real peace is local but liberal* emphasizes the significant role of the local in peacebuilding. The aspect of local is also identified as part of the second narrative *African first*, but here the concept is analyzed in terms of how it perceives the *peace* that is aimed at in peacebuilding in Africa. The promotion of the local in peacebuilding is connected to the popular perception of reaching sustainable and long-lasting results through the knowledge of the local context, inclusion and empowerment of the local context and its actors and ownership of the local of the peacebuilding process (Mathieu 2018, 1, Leonardsson & Rudd 2015):

> *When you bring that local context and that is driven by local knowledge and actors to peacebuilding, then you get real peace.* (Monde Muyangwa, 6.05)

Real peace, is achieved through the engagement of the local context and the inclusion of local knowledge in peacebuilding. This promotion of the local reflects the growing branch of liberal peacebuilding characterized as the local turn(s) in peacebuilding research (Lidén 2011, Charbonneau 2014, Paffenholz 2015, Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013). In the local turn, the real peace becomes the "everyday peace", where the local "seeks to recognize the agency and significance of actors at the sub-state level." (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2016, 309). However, Bräuchler and Naucke (2017, 429) argue, that often the claim of local ownership and the claim of peacebuilding initiatives are locally planned, owned and carried out of often turns out ambiguous in theory and practice. Muyangwa does not specify the content and meaning of the 'local' she refers to, but repeatedly referring to the importance of the concept highlights its necessity to achieve *real* peace. Again, the 'local' is used as a tool to justify and make claims about what good or right peacebuilding is (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 423, 434). *Real* peace is something to be achieved by the notion of the 'local', but the *real local* remains undefined buzzword with no specific meaning. Such ambiguity of the local has gained critique especially in terms of its usages for political agendas. Bräuchler and Naucke (2017, 429) argue, that 'local ownership' can be used "as an excuse to legitimate the (premature) withdrawal of external forces, as means to hide the real dimensions of external interventions or to improve their local legitimacy." (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 429). Furthermore, they argue that the concept is a rhetoric tool to attract donors and improve the success of grant applications for peacebuilding:

> "'Participation' and 'ownership' are nowadays acknowledged by the international community to be essential elements to build sustainable peace, which is no surprise as it was the international development and aid industry that invented them." (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 429)

This logic is reflected in Muyangwa's reply on how to approach peacebuilding in Africa through reflecting the work of one of her projects:

> *I really think it's a really really important project and I thank the Carnegie Corporation of New York for funding this project.* (Monde Muyangwa, 4.50)
>
> *I think that if peace is to be sustainable, it has to be locally owned.* (Monde Muyangwa, 5.01)

Moreover, all interviewees highlight the importance of addressing the 'local' populations affected by the conflicts in peacebuilding processes, highlight the values of inclusion and empowerment as the key tools in peacebuilding to achieve peace. These aspects refer to local, also referred as bottom-up (Richmond 2008), peacebuilding, which refers to the peacebuilding approaches which prioritize the grassroots level activity and local engagement:

> *[A]t the moment I think there's a lot more conflict starting to develop at the localized level around issues to do with water, or land access, ownership, pasture and gazing as far as livestock and pastoral lifestyles are concerned. And what that means for peacebuilding is that, I think we got to develop a lot more sort of local, detailed expertise to understand how we can resolve these conflicts"* (Paul D. Williams, 8.43)

This broadens the perspective of peacebuilding from the security-focused peacekeeping to more preventative forms of peacebuilding (Jenkins 2013, 21, Roberts 2011, 9, Richmond 2008). Séverine Autesserre reflects the problems of the peacekeeping centered international paradigm to peace efforts:

> *The first one is that there is so far not a, enough acknowledgement that certain things are problematic in peacekeeping. Let me be specific. For instance, my first book The Trouble With the Congo talks about the problems with international peace efforts by saying that we currently approach all crises, Congo included, from the top down. So we are trying to build peace by interacting with governments, with rebel leaders, with world leaders. And we assume that once we have peace between with, let's say the rebel leaders and the government, the peace will automatically trickle down. While in fact, this is not true.* (Séverine Autesserre, 3.22)

> *[T]hese kinds of conflict cannot be addressed by the kind of top-down approach to peacebuilding, the usual approach of working with government and elite.* (Séverine Autesserre, 4.30)

> *And the other part is that for a, the other main problems that I document in my work so all of the everyday practices, routines, they ways of working* […] *are not building on local knowledge assuming that outsiders know best.* (Séverine Autesserre, 5.25)

> *[I]nternational peace organizations usually don't have local knowledge and expertise*. (Séverine Autesserre, 6.42)

Autesserre builds a strong statement promoting the inclusion of the local in peacebuilding processes in order to improve the effectiveness of traditional peacebuilding approaches. The argument connects with the expanding variety of peacebuilding practices today to cover a variety of methods and approaches (Roberts 2011, 9) including the notion of "everyday peace", the local "seeks to recognize the agency and significance of actors at the sub-state level." (Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016, 309). Furthermore, the same previously identified logic of promoting local voices is referred by the interviewer and several experts (previous quotes from Monde Muyangwa p. 67, Paul D. Williams p. 82, Macharia Kamau p. 75, 78 and Lena Slachmuijlder p. 70, confirm the logic):

> *Within the field of peacebuilding, there's been a lot of criticism of international interveners and their approach to interventions and building solutions that sometimes exclude local voices and input.* (Mwangi Thuita during interview with Lena Slachmuijlder, 9.36)

> *We know that local bottom-up peacebuilding is crucial.* (Séverine Autesserre, 17.12)

However, it is crucial to note that instead of replacing the traditional top-down approaches in international peacebuilding efforts by the local bottom-up approaches, the local dimension emphasizes the need for combination of both approaches where the limits of both are acknowledged:

> *[W]e should have both top-down and bottom-up peacebuilding and that's what I keep saying is that* […] *we don't need to replace top-down peacebuilding or peace conferences in Kinshasa or Geneva in Nairobi with mini-conferences in different villages, what we need to do is to add bottom-up peacebuilding to the set of options that we currently use to resolve the Congolese crises. So we really need both of them at the same time.* (Séverine Autesserre, 27.25)

The presented critique towards the international peacebuilding efforts does not deny their significance in the peacebuilding context in Africa, but actually promotes the role of it together with the addition of local peacebuilding activities (Lidén 2011, 67). The presented critique towards the failures of

liberal peace as the primary tool in international peacebuilding (See Sabaratnam 2013, Paris 2010) does not demand change of the traditional, top-down government lead peacebuilding, but asks for the inclusion, a balance, of local, bottom-up approaches with the top-down practices (Amaechi 2017, 10, See Galtung 1976[30]). Roberts (2008, 107) argues, that such perception of peacebuilding where peace is achieved by cooperation of external and internal actors, "a multilevel approach", is often adopted in liberal peacebuilding to promote "hybrid peace" (Mac Ginty 2010, Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 430–431) or "plurality of peace" (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015, 834).

The narrative of *real peace is local but liberal* is produced through three themes where the values of liberal peace are reflected, the concepts of development and security are connected to the idea of peace and peacebuilding in Africa and finally, the promotion of local peace as part of the peacebuilding efforts on the continent is emphasized. The narrative reflects the idea by Roberts (2011, 4), where the peace that is aimed at is actually brought from the outside and conforms the external interests by morphing the "local to the global through the insemination of [l]iberal institution building". The critical perspectives presented by the interviewees about peacebuilding in Africa are presented as alternatives towards the international, namely UN led, peacebuilding tradition, but as the analysis suggests, the argumentation and reasoning of specific values and approaches in peacebuilding are derived from the dominant liberal peacebuilding paradigm.

All three narratives rely on two interesting concepts which should be promoted in peacebuilding efforts in Africa; the local and the African. The aim of promoting African peacebuilding is highlighted as the underlying reason for the African Peacebuilding Network and the production of the podcast (SSRC 2019a, 2019b). But what is this African peacebuilding the podcast and the guest speakers refer to? Is it something distinct from the international peacebuilding paradigm or does it adopt the same foundations of liberal peace? As the African peacebuilding is presented as part of the critique of the shortcomings of the international peacebuilding approaches and as an alternative for the liberal peacebuilding that dominates the international peace industry (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017), in the light of this thesis, the answer would propose the first option. However, such logic in the argumentation produces a paradox: on the other hand the African peacebuilding is seen as something distinct and separate from the international peacebuilding paradigm and its dominating liberal peace approaches but on the other hand the notions of how to develop peacebuilding in Africa is perceived through the

[30] The balancing of bottom-up and top-down peacebuilding approaches is associated with the conceptualization of peacebuilding by Galtung (1976), where peacebuilding is connected to the discovery and preservation of existing peace structures and within communities and societies.

liberal peacebuilding values, aims and motives. In order to explore the paradox, the concepts of ‘African’ and ‘local’ are discussed in the following section: How is the concept of ‘local’ produced and what kinds of meanings do the interviewees give to the promoted local peacebuilding? What kinds of similarities and differences there are between the ‘local’ and the ‘African’ or are they treated as synonyms? And ultimately, by whom and for what purpose are the notions of ‘African’ and ‘African peacebuilding’ constructed in the podcast?

6. Discussion

The results of this research analyzing how the Kujenga Amani podcast narrates about peacebuilding in Africa creates a paradox where the 'African' perspectives, 'African' ownership and 'local' peacebuilding are promoted as a critique to the failures of liberal peace while at the same time, the ideals of peace and peacebuilding in Africa are connected to the liberal peace theory. The same contradiction of reasoning the current state of peacebuilding in Africa is present in all three narratives: *The needy Africa* -narrative presents the existing critique towards the international peacebuilding approaches but at the same time emphasizes its necessity for the peacebuilding in Africa; *the African first* -narrative highlights the importance of 'African' knowledge, perspectives and ownership in peacebuilding on the continent, but does so by the processes of othering and framing the continent as inferior and outsider from the international; and finally *the real peace is local but liberal* -narrative promotes the use of 'local' in peacebuilding in Africa as a response to the criticism of international peacebuilding but the 'local' itself seems to reflect the conceptualization embedded in liberal values which are defined and imposed from the outside.

Therefore, the podcast approaches peacebuilding in Africa through the emphasis of the 'local' which is equated with 'African' but with the use of the values of liberal peace which are not necessarily local, but with the assumption that they are. The legitimization of the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa are constructed through the reference of the 'local' (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017) and the 'African'. The reasoning in the argumentation by the experts reflect the values and aims of liberal peacebuilding by prioritizing the role of governance and democracy, human rights, development and local ownership. The progress and state of peacebuilding in Africa is assessed through the level of democracy and good governance, fulfillment of human rights and developmental progress.

Furthermore, the local peacebuilding efforts are legitimized and explained by activities which are externally designed and implemented models, where the local actors are "diagnosed by external experts and solutions found through experiences from elsewhere" (Carvalho et al. 2014, 6). Hellmüller (2014, 3) argues, that often such "local initiatives are assessed based on their compatibility with liberal values". Figure 2 illustrates the paradox of creating the notion of African peacebuilding though the three narratives that are formed around contradicting elements of promoting the liberal peace, the local and the African in peacebuilding practices on the continent.

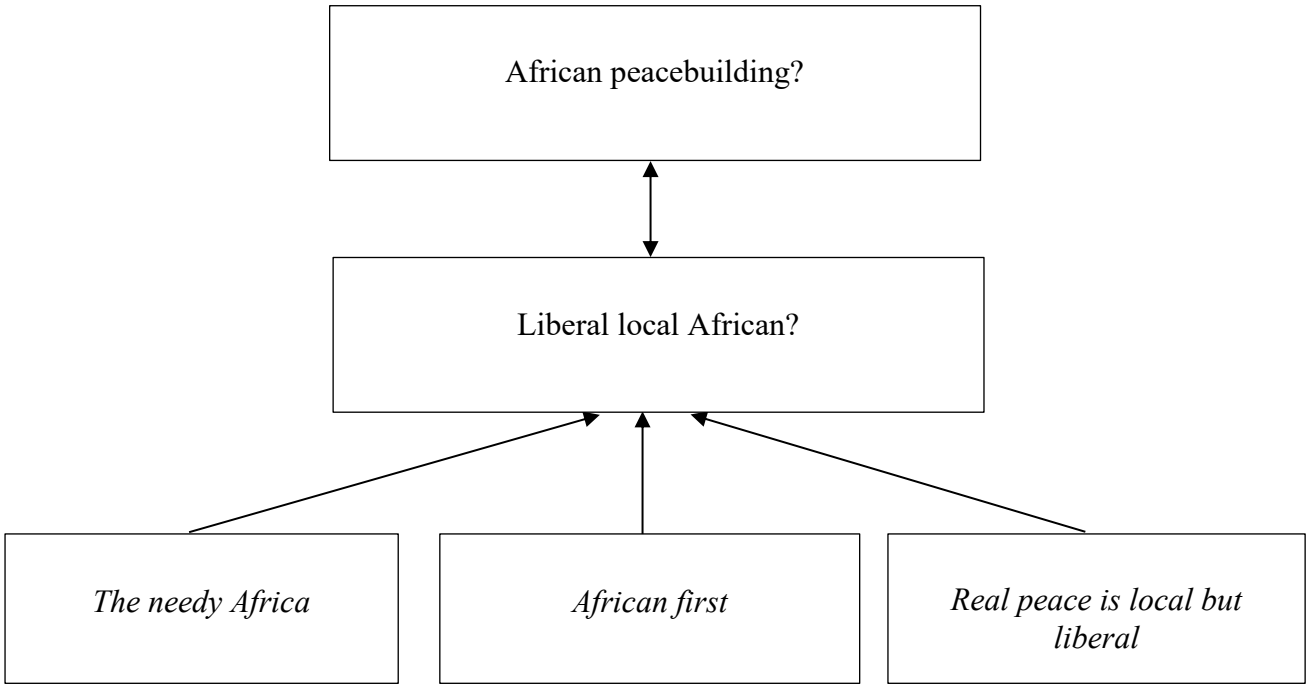

Figure 2: The paradox of African peacebuilding

In order to explore the meaning of African peacebuilding, the concept of African needs to be discussed. The concept of 'African' is argued to be highly political. The content and meaning of the 'African' can be approached through various perspectives, including geographical boundaries and shared cultural entities. Hussein Solomon (2015, 57) argues, that the concept of 'African' can be understood through the colonial history with a certain level of shared experiences and cultural similarities:

> "Following independence from colonial powers, African state leaders and diplomatic elites perceived themselves to be members of an 'African' international society based on a degree of shared historical experiences and cultural ties."

Jackson and Rosberg (1982, 17) further argue, that "'Africa' is a political idea as well as a geographical fact with a distinctive ideology: African nationalism". The ideology resulted from the universal African experience of colonial domination and the independence from European rule. This "common political experience" constructs the concept of "African" which is linked to the liberation of the continent in the name of "African 'freedom'", also known as Pan-Africanism. (Jackson & Rosberg 1982, 17.) However, this assumed cultural and political unity of the 'African' is increasingly contested (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005). Therefore, both concepts, the 'local' and the 'African' remain elusive and contested in their meaning and content. Perhaps exactly this character of the

ambiguous concepts contributes to their extensive usage in various political and non-political (if there even can be such) contexts.

While the 'African' is emphasized in many instances during the interviews, the precise meaning of the concept is not given. Séverine Autesserre refers to the African people as the *intended beneficiaries*, which can either reflect certain specific geographical territory or an area with a specific group of people (Jackson & Rosberg 1982, 17) or a larger group of people who are not directly bound to specific area but might still be sharing common historical and cultural sense of belonging. Paul D. Williams talks about the *African states*, *African civil servants* and the *African answer* to peace and security challenges that has been different compared with the rest of the world. The latter is connected to the AU's peace and security institution's responses on the continent. These references address the African primarily as a political concept or an idea (Jackson & Rosberg 1982, 17) which defines the concept through membership or belonging to certain political entities. Similarly, Macharia Kamau highlights to AU's pioneering role in international peacebuilding arena as the head of United Nations in recognizing the value of sustaining peace, where the African becomes understood through political entity (Jackson & Rosberg 1982, 17). During the interview with Lena Slachmuijlder, the interviewer asks about partnering with *locally based African intellectuals* as part of the peacebuilding work to which Slachmuijlder specifies *academics* working in Nigeria, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Here the African is defined through states that are on the African continent where both geographical and political determinants (Jackson & Rosberg 1982, 17) play a role. Interestingly, Monde Muyangwa highlights most the concept of African: *the African perspectives, African driven partnerships, African voices, African knowledge, African practical experience, African approaches, African research and expertise,* while leaving the specific meanings of such concepts undefined. She also addresses the African continent and the African states, where the African becomes defined through political institutions and geographical boundaries (Rosberg & Jackson 1982, 17).

Moreover, the promotion of the 'local' in peacebuilding in Africa is connected with the promotion of the 'African' in peacebuilding, 'African ownership' and 'African knowledge'. The 'local' becomes synonymous with the 'African'. As one of the contemporary buzzwords of peacebuilding, the reference of 'local ownership' remains undefined and ambiguous (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 429). The content and meaning of the 'local' vary within the answers and remain elusive. Moreover, Hirblinger & Simons (2015) argue, that representations of the local relate to political agendas in peacebuilding, and are conflictingly produced by scholars, practitioners, and government officials. Bräuchler and Naucke (2017) argue, that similarly with the concept of culture, also the local is

"constantly renegotiated, reinterpreted, reconstructed or even invented, they are challenged from within and from the outside, influenced by local and global factors, and continuously in the making" (see also Hirblinger & Simons 2015). Therefore, the concept of 'local' is highly political, contrary to the notion of liberal peace paradigm (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 432).

How are these processes of addressing the local present in the podcast? As stated earlier, the interviewer asks from Lena Slachmuijlder about the opportunities in partnering with *locally based African intellectuals* where the local becomes associated with the African. Séverine Autesserre connects the local in relation to scale where the local is understood as something at the 'bottom', 'on the ground' or works from the 'bottom-up' (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 423), as she refers local conflicts between *communities* or *villages* and *bottom-up peacebuilding* which approaches peacebuilding as an activity *working on the ground*, with the last reference present also in Slachmuijlder's talk. Similar logic of conceptualizing the local through the relation with scale is present in Paul D. Williams's reference to conflicts starting to develop at the *localized level* around issues to do with water, land access and ownership, pasture and gazing whereas Macharia Kamau emphasizes the importance of working with *youth*, *women* and *communities* as a core way of delivering peace. The connection of the local to conflicts between communities, youth, women and specific conflict causes such as land ownership issues can be linked to a broader global trend to emphasize grassroots empowerment where the fostering civil society and cultural rights is at the core of the rhetoric; or seen as a reaction to mere absence or malfunctioning national jurisdiction that has led to the emphasis of traditional justice systems functioning at the local level (Bräuchler & Naucke 2015, 43).

But who defines what the right local or real local is? As discussed earlier, the critiques of the local turn(s) have highlighted the peacebuilding approaches based on the 'local' include problems of selective glorification and adoption of certain elements and practices while excluding unfitting factors that contradict liberal peacebuilding models (Bräuchler & Naucke 2017, 432). Moreover, the emphasis of the 'local' in peacebuilding involves problematic assumptions over the capabilities of their "intended beneficiaries" of in the implementation of such practices. Bräuchler and Naucke (2017, 431) argue that,

> "'The local' might simply not be able to deal with exceptional mass violence and may thus rely on incentives or insights from the outside to initiate the reconciliation and peace process in which they can nonetheless be the leading players."

What if the local people are not willing to acts as “agents for peace”, the central premise of the local turn scholars according to Paffenholz (2015, 857)? This critique towards the underlying assumptions in the local peacebuilding highlight the problems associated with the conceptualization of the local by the scholars: whichever local they refer to, and its practices of knowledge production, contribute to shape the local that scholars are looking for (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 425). The use of local can be harnessed to fill the needs of liberal peacebuilding agenda.

Furthermore, case studies have shown that the different representations and perceptions of the ‘local’ have induced power struggles and shaped political dynamics:

> “[C]onflicting practices of representation, claiming to depict what the local really is and how it relates to peace and conflict, have had a considerable impact on the political dynamics of peacebuilding.” (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 423)

Since the reality of the ‘local’ includes an infinite variety of representations which are socially (re)constructed (See Berger & Luckmann 1985), the decision of which representation is chosen over another becomes a question of power. Lena Slachmuijlder perceives the engagement of the local as partnerships with influential artists and local champions to create aspirational heroes to be the role models for building peace. However, such representation of the local is selective and does not necessarily represent the reality of the capabilities, resources, aims and motives present in the variety of the local. Moreover, such processes of claiming the truth about the ‘local’ furthers specific political agendas, legitimizes specific approaches and importantly, how these chosen representations of the local produce and shape certain peacebuilding outcomes. (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 423.) Therefore, understanding of the processes of using the ‘local’ in peacebuilding is crucial in order to improve the effectiveness of such practices.

More broadly speaking, this paradox reflects the argumentation by Paris (2010) towards the criticism of the contemporary peacebuilding theories. According to him, the existing critique towards the failures of liberal peacebuilding does not present alternative approaches as they claim but in fact variations of it (Paris 2010, 339). This would imply, and is reflected in the results of this research, that also the postcolonial peacebuilding and the local turn(s) theories fundamentally rely on the liberal peacebuilding logic and values to approach and legitimize peacebuilding approaches in Africa. Simultaneously, this argumentation is connected presenting critique and alternatives to liberal peace, but eventually those alternatives are embedded in the liberal peace paradigm. Furthermore, such paradox is further advanced by referring to local as African, which reflects the theoretical

underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding that are formed from colonial logic (Lidén 2011, 57) and where the vast diversity of the continent and the 'African' is reduced to single homogenous entity (Nothias 2018, see Wainaina 2005) by the outside, external actors.

Moreover, the local-liberal-African paradox produced by the analysis seems to reflect the broader problem of peacebuilding theories according to Lidén (2011, 30):

> "[T]he current theoretical framework of peacebuilding is flawed because it fails to interpret war-torn societies in their own terms. Instead, they are reduced to the negative of problematic Eurocentric representation of 'the liberal peace'".

The norms and values of liberal peacebuilding are delivered through the reference of the importance of the 'local' and 'African' in peacebuilding in Africa, but the actual content of such initiatives focusing on those concepts stem from the toolbox of liberal peace. Interpreting the conflict contexts in Africa in the 'local' terms seems to remain elusive. In such conceptual ambiguity, the reality of designing and implementing effective peacebuilding approaches seems more than challenging.

To conclude, the analysis and the discussion over the resulting narratives about peacebuilding in Africa that construct the paradox of African peacebuilding highlight the need to critically assess the use of seemingly consensual concepts with "general political acceptance" but highly ambiguous nature. As pointed out throughout the thesis, the various meanings and interpretations given to specific concepts vary within time and space and serve for different political purposes. Therefore, what the choice analysis method and results of this research aim to propose, is that rather than engaging in the pursuit of making fact and value claims about the African peacebuilding, an overarching perspective on the conflicting representations of the local, African, international and their relation to political agendas, and the tangible effects this has on peace, conflict and (in)security (Hirblinger & Simons 2015, 426) should be prioritized in the contemporary peacebuilding research. This would move the focus from using ambiguous concepts from various purposes to the analysis of the effect such usages have in the peacebuilding practices in Africa.

7. Conclusion

> "[T]he essence of what might be perhaps the deepest and most complex issue of all facing Africa: what it means to be an African today. Part of this identity is one not determined by Africans themselves." (Maathai 2010, 22)

Wangari Muta Maathai, the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, has summarized the underlying notion characterizing the outcomes of this thesis and perhaps the most salient question regarding what African peacebuilding is or should be. What is *African peacebuilding* today and who are, and ultimately should be, defining it?

This thesis has illustrated that the narratives about peacebuilding in Africa reflect the international peacebuilding paradigm of liberal peace with emphasis on local peacebuilding with African perspectives and voices. The notions of 'local', 'African' and 'African peacebuilding' can be seen as discursive constructions which create the reality they seem to reflect, and by doing so serve specific purposes and interests. The power of definition over 'African' and 'African peacebuilding' also implies the power to define not only the relevant field of interest, but also the material content of practices, the distribution of resources and subsequent policy responses[31]. The widespread discourse of 'African peacebuilding' and promotion of 'African' approaches to peacebuilding seems to create a picture of, as if there would be, agreed understanding of both the content and meaning of these concepts as well as the consequences of creating policies which reflects a certain understanding of the 'African'. (See Stern & Öjendal 2012, 16). In the light of this thesis however, such consensus over the concepts remains to be defined, which sets both hindrances of developing efficient and adaptable peacebuilding approaches and increases the risk of misusage of the concepts to cover other motives and agendas. Or perhaps its power and legitimacy rely on the ambiguous and undefined character which can be adopted to serve various purposes. In any case, the concept of 'African' peacebuilding needs to be further evaluated and its contextual usages and motives assessed in order to avoid using the term just as a rhetorical façade.

Furthermore, this thesis has served for an illustrative discussion through one example of the variety of ways in which peacebuilding in Africa is narrated through *Kujenga Amani* podcast. It offers a critical reflection on how peacebuilding in Africa can be (and is being) understood and produced for

[31] Similar argumentation has been elaborated by Chandler (2007) and Stern & Öjendal (2012) in terms of the contested meaning of development-security nexus.

purposes of understanding and shaping the contemporary and the emerging world, and ultimately how ambiguous the use of popular peacebuilding narratives can be. This observation calls for further exploration of narratives with the use of the methodological approach, namely narrative analysis, adopted in this research. Moreover, it contributes to the ongoing debate of the meanings and interpretations given for *African peacebuilding*. At the time of emerging Africa strategies[32] by various national and international institutions, the critical assessment of the usages of 'African' and 'African peacebuilding', should be considered in order to explore the political motives behind the concepts. In the light of the results in this thesis, it would be interesting to further analyze also other forms of data, such as policy documents, public speeches and judicial resolutions which address the current state of peacebuilding in Africa and how to improve its prospects in the future. Such exploration would contribute to the justified pursuit of *African peacebuilding* through further evaluation of what the concept of 'African' stands for in different contexts, how the societal discussions and debates reflect the notions of it and how the concept is used to justify different political agendas.

Moreover, as a rapidly increasing media platform, podcasts generate significant possibilities to shape and direct discussions, create popular narratives and shift power positions, as they are accessible and have the potential to reach unlimited audiences. Therefore, it is necessary explore such platforms and their various usages which will most likely continue to increase in the near future. At the time of writing this, the importance of critical assessment of information from various media sources cannot be more emphasized. The unforeseen global threat, the COVID-19[33] virus has introduced an increasing demand for various media platforms, including podcasts, to explore new ways of information sharing at the times of emergency when face-to-face contacts are restricted. This increases the use of podcasts and other media platforms exponentially. Simultaneously, this increases the demand for critical assessment of different ways of information sharing, as such times of emergency open space for spreading false information and provoking uncertainty. These aspects speak for the relevance of further assessment of podcasts and their influence on the public security not only in peace and conflict studies but also in social sciences in general. Moreover, they illustrate the necessity of understanding the value of podcasts as relevant sources of data and knowledge. In the light of such circumstances, this thesis illustrates a timely contribution to these challenges.

[32] For example, the European Union and various states, including Finland, have introduced Africa strategies to guide future policies and international cooperation.
[33] COVID-19 stands for Corona Virus Disease 2019.

The aim of the *Kujenga Amani* podcast of promoting African perspectives and knowledge in the field of African peacebuilding at first sight invites the listeners to hear new insights to the contemporary peacebuilding debates among scholars, policy makers and practitioners. However, in the light of this thesis, such ambitious guest fails to provide specified thoughts on what such alternatives could or should entail, and most crucially, what the specific notion of African peacebuilding includes. Through the narrative analysis of this case study, the notion of 'African peacebuilding' is reflecting the liberal peace paradigm, which imposes a question whether in the context of the global power structures, liberal peace paradigm and Western domination of contemporary peace and conflict research, the creation of a distinct and alternative concept of 'African peacebuilding' can be constructed and ultimately, for what reasons it is feasible? Could it be something that other locations could learn and benefit from? In essence, this is a crucial question to be asked from the peace and conflict studies academia.

Moreover, the synonymous use of 'local' and 'African' seems to impose a question to the broader academic community in peace and conflict studies. How colonial overtones influence the conceptualization of theoretical tools produced in peace and conflict studies? How the 'local' is perceived and addressed in academic discussions and more specifically in the policy recommendations promoting the 'local' in peacebuilding in Africa? What kinds of meanings and justifications are given to the 'local' in peacebuilding to legitimize its promotion on the continent? Which motives and purposes are behind of such promotion and who do they ultimately serve? Who defines the processes of inclusion and exclusion in defining the 'local' and ultimately, how the conceptualization of the 'local' and 'African' are interconnected in the peacebuilding narratives through colonial logic and what kinds of implications do such assumptions impose in peace and conflict studies more in general? This thesis problematizes the use of 'local' precisely in peace and conflict studies. By doing so, it serves for a theoretical and conceptual contribution opening a discussion on how the 'local' is used. Unless the meaning and usages of the 'local' are not assessed, there is a risk of creating obscure generalizations of the existing diverse localities, which in turn, by reflecting the colonial logic, end up reproducing the colonial structures they were meant to deconstruct in the first place. Without such critical assessment of the limitations and restrictions present in the various usages of the 'local', the future research in peace and conflict studies is not only producing unintended implications but also condemned to be insufficient, limited and even deceptive.

These observations call for the need for the re-assessment of contemporary categorizations which seem to create unnecessary processes of differentiation between the concepts of liberal, local and African. Are the liberal values necessarily foreign to the concept of African or the notion of African peacebuilding? Similarly, are the liberal values somehow perceived distinct or contradictory to the concept of the local? Is there a need for such distinctions if they create conceptual ambiguity and end up broadening the gap between theory and practice? A constructive way forward would be moving beyond unnecessary distinctions and processes of othering, and instead focus on the context specific needs on peacebuilding efforts on the African continent. This introduces a notion of needs-based peacebuilding approach, which would be based on the genuine engagement of the local actors and learning process of their context specific needs instead of defining and exposing concepts such as African peacebuilding from the outside. Such approach would allow a more detailed and effective approach to address the vast plurality present on the continent, where actors engaging and producing processes and approaches of peacebuilding would have the freedom of defining the practical and theoretical tools that best support their activities. Broadening the perspective from pre-defined and constrained concepts which make unnecessary and counter-productive distinctions between us and them shift away the focus from the most important goal in peacebuilding research on the continent: building peace in Africa.

To conclude, as one of the most conflict prone regions, the importance of further research focusing on various conceptualizations of peacebuilding on the African continent cannot be over-emphasized. This research adds to the ongoing need to improve theoretical and conceptual approaches to address the various challenges and possibilities related to peacebuilding on the continent by discussing the multidimensional usages of popular concepts in contemporary peacebuilding debates which are far from being neutral. This also calls for the assessment of power: who gets to define the meaning and content of powerful concepts which guide the world politics, whose voices are heard in these discussions and ultimately, whose voices are silenced. Furthermore, this research contributes to the discussion on how information is produced and how the production of certain narratives about peacebuilding in Africa from certain positions (re)shape the realities they seem to reflect. This assessment is essential wherever the concept of African peacebuilding may appear to influence policy making and public perceptions, whether at the claimed local, national, continental or international levels. What this thesis has hopefully illustrated, is that the consensus of the usages of the concept seems highly equivocal. What is evidently clear however, is that for the foreseeable future, the way we perceive, pursue and produce *African peacebuilding* will be of crucial importance.

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